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A Dissertation on the Effects of cultivating the Arts and Sciences. p. 1.

A Dissertation on the Origin and Foundation of the Inequality of Mankind. 135

THE

MISCELLANEOUS

WORKS

OF

Mr. J. J. ROUSSEAU.

IN FIVE VOLUMES.

VOLUME I.

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PREFACE.

THE following pages contain a diſcuſſion of one of the moſt ſublime and intereſting of all moral queſtions. It is not compoſed, however, of thoſe metaphyſical ſubtilties, which of late have ſo much infected every branch of literature; and from which even our academical theſes are not always exempted. It is indeed, nothing more than a ſimple inveſtigation of one of thoſe truths, on which the happineſs of mankind depends.

I foreſee that I ſhall not eaſily be forgiven in having taken the unpopular ſide of the queſtion. The writer who openly attacks what is univerſally admired, will of courſe be univerſally cenſured: nor will his having obtained the approbation of a few ſenſible men, enſure him that of the public. But no matter: my reſolution is taken: nor am I at all ſollicitous to pleaſe either pretenders to wit or people of faſhion. There are men in all ages formed to adopt the prevailing opinions of their peculiar communities. Thus our preſent philoſophers and free-thinkers, if

they had lived in the time of the League, had been nothing more than mere fanatics. Such readers are not to be regarded, by those who write for posterity.

A word more and I have done. As I did not much expect the honour this piece hath received, I augmented and altered it, after I had sent it to the academy, in so much as to make it almost a new piece. In this publication, however, I thought it necessary to restore it to its pristine form; being that in which it was favoured with the prize: except that I have taken the liberty to subjoin a few notes, and have left two alterations which are easily perceived, and are such as the academy possibly might not have approved. The respect, gratitude and even justice due to that body require of me this acknowledgment.

A

DISSERTATION

ON THE

EFFECTS

OF CULTIVATING THE

ARTS AND SCIENCES.

Decipimur Specie recti.

INTRODUCTION.

THE queſtion before me is, "Whether the Reſtoration of the arts and ſciences hath contributed moſt to the purity or corruption of manners?" The ſide I ſhall take in determining it, is that, gentlemen, which becomes an honeſt man, ſenſible of his own ignorance, and yet in his own opinion no leſs eſtimable on that account.

I perceive it will be difficult to treat this ſubject with propriety, before the tribunal who are now to judge of what is advanced. How ſhall I preſume to cenſure the ſciences, before one of the moſt ſcientific aſſemblies in Europe,

to commend ignorance to an Academy celebrated for its knowledge, and to conciliate a contempt for ſtudy with the reſpect due to the truly learned?

I was aware of theſe inconſiſtencies, but not diſcouraged by them. I excuſed myſelf by reflecting that I ſhould not make an attack on ſcience, but engage in the defence of virtue, and that even in the eyes of the virtuous; who are ſtill more attached to probity than even the learned to erudition.

What have I then to fear? The knowledge and penetration of the aſſembly to whom my performance is addreſſed? This I acknowledge; but it is on account of the merits of the compoſition, not the deſign of my piece. Equitable ſovereigns have not heſitated to decide againſt themſelves, when they have ſat as judges in a doubtful cauſe; and indeed the moſt advantageous ſituation in which a juſt claim can be exhibited, is that of being laid before an enlightened and juſt arbitrator, who is at once judge and party in the cauſe.

To this encouraging motive I may add another which has finally determined me. And this is, that after having maintained the cauſe of truth, to the beſt of my natural abilities, whatever be my apparent ſucceſs, there is one prize I cannot fail of poſſeſſing in ſecret; which is the conſcious ſatisfaction ariſing from it in my own breaſt.

PART

PART THE FIRST.

IT is a noble and beautiful retroſpect, to take a view of man, riſing in a manner by his own efforts out of nothing, and diſſipating by the light of reaſon that darkneſs with which he was by nature inveloped: to ſee him raiſe himſelf in imagination beyond his native ſphere; penetrating the celeſtial regions, and, like the ſun, encompaſſing, with giant ſtrides, the vaſt extent of the univerſe: to behold him again deſcend into himſelf, a taſk ſtill more noble and difficult! There to inveſtigate his own nature and faculties, and thence diſcover the deſign of his creation and his duty to his fellow-creatures. The operation of all theſe miracles hath been renewed within a few generations.

Europe having relapſed into the barbariſm of the primitive ages; the inhabitants of this part of the world, at preſent ſo greatly enlightened, long lived in a ſtate ſtill worſe than that of ignorance. A ſcientific jargon, more deſpicable than mere ignorance, had uſurped the name of learning, and formed an almoſt invincible obſtacle to its reſtoration.

Things were arrived at ſuch a paſs, that it even required a total revolution in the ideas of mankind, to bring them back again to common ſenſe. This was at length brought about by means from which it was leaſt expected. It

was the ſtupid Muſſulman, that perpetual ſcourge of letters, who was the immediate cauſe of their revival among us. The fall of the throne of Conſtantine carried into Italy the ruins of ancient Greece; with which precious ſpoils France in her turn was enriched. The ſciences ſoon followed literature, and the art of thinking united itſelf to that of writing: a mode of gradation which may ſeem ſtrange, and which is perhaps but too natural. The world now began to perceive the principal advantage of an intercourſe with the muſes, viz. that of rendering mankind more ſocial by inſpiring a mutual deſire to pleaſe, by performances worthy of reciprocal approbation.

Man is ſubject to intellectual as well as to corporeal neceſſities. The latter conſtitute the fabric of ſociety, and the former the ornaments of it.

So long as government and the laws provide for the ſecurity and happineſs of a people, the arts and ſciences, leſs deſpotic though perhaps more powerful, conceal the iron chains of ſlavery under a garland of flowers. They ſtifle in the breaſts of mankind that ſenſe of liberty, for the enjoyment of which we ſeem to have been born; and, by making us enamoured with ſlavery, form what is called a poliſhed people *. Ne-

* Sovereigns behold always with pleaſure, a taſte for the arts of amuſement and ſuperfluities, when they do not require an exportation of bullion, increaſe among their ſubjects. They very well know that, beſides its nouriſhing that littleneſs of mind which

Neceſſity erected thrones; the arts and ſciences have ſupported them. It is yours, ye potentates of the earth, to diſtinguiſh literary talents and protect thoſe who cultivate them. It is yours, ye poliſhed nations, to merit ſuch protection. Yes, ye happy ſlaves, it is to literature and the ſciences you owe that delicacy of taſte, which is ſo much your boaſt; that candour of diſpoſition, that urbanity of manners which render your converſation ſo agreeable and eaſy. In a word, it is to them you owe the appearance of all the virtues, without being in poſſeſſion of one.

It was by this ſpecies of politeneſs, which is by ſo much the more captivating as it ſeems leſs affected, that Athens and Rome were ſo much diſtinguiſhed in the boaſted times of their ſplendour and magnificence: and it is doubtleſs by the ſame means that our own age and nation will diſtinguiſh itſelf above all thoſe of antiquity. A philoſophical preciſion void of pedantry; a complacency free from affectation, equally diſtant from the ruſticity of the Germans and the buffoonery of the Italians; theſe are the effects of a taſte acquired by liberal ſtudies and

which is favourable to tyranny, the people in creating artificial wants are only forging their own chains. Alexander, being deſirous of keeping the Ichthyopages in a ſtate of dependence, he compelled them to give over fiſhing, and ſubſiſt on the cuſtomary food of civilized nations. The American ſavages, who go naked, and live on the products of the chaſe, could never be ſubdued. In fact what yoke can be impoſed on men who ſtand in need of nothing!

improved by converſation with the world. How happy would it be for thoſe who live among us, if our external appearance were always a picture of the inward diſpoſition of our hearts; if decorum were but virtue; if the maxims we profeſſed were the rules of our conduct; and if real philoſophy were inſeparable from the appellation of a philoſopher! But ſo many good qualities ſeldom go together; virtue delights not in ſo much pomp.

A ſuperb dreſs may denote opulence; an elegant one a man of taſte; but the healthy and robuſt are known by different indications. It is under the ruſtic habit of a labourer, and not beneath the lace or embroidery of a courtier, that we ſhould look for bodily ſtrength and activity.

Exteriour ornaments are no leſs foreign to virtue, which is the ſtrength and activity of the mind. The man of probity is an athletic, who loves to combat his adverſary naked; deſpiſing thoſe paultry trappings, which prevent the exertion of his ſtrength, and were, for the moſt part, invented only to conceal ſome deformity.

Before art had poliſhed our manners, and taught our paſſions to ſpeak the language of affectation, our morals were rude but natural: while a difference in point of behaviour denoted at firſt ſight a difference of diſpoſition. Human nature was not in itſelf better; but mankind found their ſecurity in the facility of reciprocally knowing each other's character. And this advantage, of which we know not the value, prevented their being guilty of many vices.

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At preſent, more ſubtile reſearches and a more refined taſte have reduced the art of pleaſing to a vulgar ſyſtem. Hence it is that a ſervile and fallacious conformity prevails in modern manners; ſo that one would think our minds were all caſt in the ſame mould. Politeneſs requires this thing; decorum that; ceremony has its forms, and faſhion its laws, by which we are conſtantly prevented following the dictates of our own genius or underſtanding.

We dare no longer appear what we really are, but lie under a perpetual reſtraint; in the mean time the herd of mankind, which we may call the world, act all under the ſame circumſtances exactly alike, unleſs ſome very particular and powerful motives prevent them. By theſe means, we are ever at a loſs with regard to a man's true character; and even to know one's friend muſt wait for ſome critical and preſſing occaſion; that is, till it is too late; as it is on thoſe very occaſions ſuch knowledge is of any uſe to us.

What a train of vices muſt neceſſarily attend this uncertainty! Sincere friendſhip, real eſteem, and perfect confidence are baniſhed from among men: while umbrage, ſuſpicion, fear, coldneſs, reſerve, hate and fraud, lie conſtantly concealed under that uniform and deceitful veil of politeneſs; that boaſted candour and urbanity, for which we are indebted to the ſuperior knowledge of this enlightened age. Oaths and imprecations are become vulgar, and the name of our Creator is no longer profaned in polite company; whoſe delicate ears nevertheleſs are not in the leaſt offended at the moſt

horrid blaſphemy. We are grown too modeſt to boaſt our own merit; but ſcruple not to enhance it, by derogating from that of others. We do not rudely attack even our enemies, but artfully calumniate them. Our prejudices againſt other nations diminiſh, but ſo at the ſame time doth our love for our own country. To a deſpicable ignorance hath ſucceeded a dangerous ſcepticiſm. Some vices indeed are condemned and others grown unfaſhionable; but then we have ſtill many that are honoured with the names of virtues, and it is become neceſſary that we ſhould either have, or at leaſt affect to have them. Let who will extol the moderation of our modern ſages, I ſee nothing in it for my part, but a refined ſpecies of intemperance as unworthy of my commendation as their artificial ſimplicity *.

Such is the purity which our morals have required; thus it is we are become virtuous. Let the arts and ſciences reclaim the ſhare they have had in this ſalutary work. To this I ſhall add but one reflection more; which is this, that if an inhabitant of ſome diſtant country ſhould endeavour to form an idea of European morals from the ſtate of the ſciences, the perfection of the arts, the decorum of our public

* "I like," ſaid Montaigne, "to converſe and hold an argument; but it is with very few people, and that for my own gratification. For to do this, by way of affording amuſement for the great, or of making a parade of one's talents, is, in my opinion, an employment very ill-becoming a man of honour."

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entertainments, the politeneſs of our behaviour, the affability of our diſcourſe, our conſtant profeſſions of benevolence, and from thoſe tumultuous aſſemblies of people of all ranks, that appear from morning till night, ſolicitous to oblige each other. Such a ſtranger, I ſay, would conceive our ſyſtem of morals to be totally contrary to what it really is.

Where there is no apparent effect, it is idle to look for a cauſe: but here the effect is certain; it is an actual depravation; our minds being corrupted in the ſame proportion, as the arts and ſciences are improved. Will it be ſaid, that this is a misfortune peculiar to the preſent age? No, gentlemen, the evils reſulting from our vain curioſity are coeval with the world. The daily ebbing and flowing of the tides are not more regularly influenced by the moon, than the morals of a people by the progreſs of the arts and ſciences. Virtue hath diſappeared in proportion as their light hath been diſplayed above the horizon, and the ſame phenomenon hath been conſtantly obſerved in all times and in all places.

Turn your eyes to Egypt, the firſt ſchool of mankind, that ancient country, famous for its fertility under a barren ſky; the ſpot from which Seſoſtris once ſet out on his expedition to conquer the world. Egypt became the mother of philoſophy and the fine arts; ſoon after which it was conquered by Cambyſes, and then ſucceſſively by the Greeks, the Romans, the Arabs, and finally by the Turks.

Let us next take a ſurvey of Greece, once peopled by heroes, who twice made themſelves

masters of Asia. Letters, as yet in their infancy, had not corrupted the disposition of its inhabitants; but the progress of the sciences, soon produced a dissoluteness of manners, and the imposition of the Macedonian yoke: from which time Greece, ever since learned, voluptuous and enslaved, hath experienced nothing but a change of masters amidst all its revolutions. Not the eloquence of Demosthenes himself could reanimate a body once enervated by luxury and the arts.

It was not till the days of Ennius and Terence that Rome, founded by a shepherd, and rendered illustrious by husbandmen, began to degenerate. But after the appearance of an Ovid, a Catullus a Martial, and the rest of those numerous obscene authors, whose very names are sufficient to put modesty to the blush, Rome, heretofore the temple of virtue, became the theatre of vice, a scorn among the nations; and the object of derision even to barbarians. Thus the capital of the world at length submitted to the yoke of slavery it had imposed on others: the very day of its fall being that in which it conferred on one of its citizens the title of umpire in subjects of taste.

What shall I say of that metropolis of the eastern empire, which, by its situation, seemed calculated to be capital of the world; that asylum of the arts and sciences, when they were banished from the rest of Europe, more perhaps through policy than barbarism? The most profligate debaucheries, the most abandoned villanies, the most atrocious crimes, plots, murders and assassinations form the chain of facts

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which conſtitute the hiſtory of Conſtantinople. Yet from this pure and poliſhed ſource are derived thoſe boaſted rays which have illuminated the preſent age.

But wherefore ſhould we recur to paſt ages, for proofs of a truth, of which the preſent affords us ſufficient evidence. There is a vaſt empire in Aſia, in which the paths of literature are reſpected as leading to the firſt and moſt honourable employments in the ſtate. If the ſciences improved our morals, if they inſpired us with courage and taught us to lay down our lives for the good of our country, the Chineſe ſhould be of courſe, a wiſe, free and invincible people. But, if there be hardly a vice which they do not practiſe; if there be hardly a crime to which they are not familiar; if neither the ſagacity of their miniſters, the pretended wiſdom of their laws, nor the multitude of inhabitants who people that vaſt empire could preſerve them from ſubjection to the yoke of the rude and ignorant Tartars, of what uſe were their men of ſcience and literature? What advantage hath that country reaped from the honours beſtowed on its literati? That of being peopled by a race of ſcoundrels and ſlaves!

Let us oppoſe to theſe inſtances that of the morals of a few nations; who, being preſerved from the contagion of uſeleſs knowledge, have by their virtues become happy in themſelves and afford a ſhining example to others. Such were the firſt inhabitants of Perſia, a nation ſo ſingular that virtue was taught among them in the ſame manner as the ſciences are with us. They

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ſubdued Aſia with great facility, and poſſeſs the excluſive glory of having the ſimple hiſtory of their political inſtitutions regarded by poſterity as a philoſophical romance. Such were the Scythians, of whom are tranſmitted from antiquity ſuch wonderful commendations. Such were the Germans, whoſe ſimplicity, innocence and virtue, afforded a moſt delightful contraſt to the pen of an hiſtorian, wearied with deſcribing the baſeneſs and villanies of an enlightened, opulent and voluptuous nation. Such had been even Rome in the days of its poverty and ignorance. And ſuch have we ſeen even in our own times, that ruſtic nation, whoſe juſtly boaſted courage not even adverſity hath been able to depreſs, and whoſe fidelity, not example hath been able to corrupt *.

It is not through ſtupidity that the latter have preferred other exerciſes to thoſe of the underſtanding. They were not ignorant that in other countries there were idle men who ſpent their time in diſputing about the ſovereign good, and about vice and virtue. They knew alſo that theſe vain reaſoners, while they were la-

* I dare not ſpeak of thoſe happy nations, who knew not even the name of many vices, which we find it ſo difficult to ſuppreſs; the ſavages of America, whoſe ſimple and natural policy is by Montaigne preferred, without heſitation, not only to the laws of Plato, but to the moſt perfect ſyſtem of government philoſophy hath ever ſuggeſted. He cites many ſtriking examples, for thoſe who are capable of admiring them. But, what of all that, ſays he, the poor creatures are not worth a pair of breeches!

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viſh in their own praiſes, indiſcriminately ſtigmatized other nations with the contemptuous appellation of Barbarians. But they conſidered the morals of theſe polite people, and thence were inſtructed to diſpute their learning *.

Can it be forgotten that, in the very heart of Greece, aroſe a city as famous for the happy ignorance of its inhabitants, as for the wiſdom of its laws; a republic of demi-gods rather than of men, ſo greatly ſuperior ſeemed their virtues to thoſe of mere humanity! Hail, Sparta! thou eternal diſgrace to the vanity of ſcience; who, while the vices, conducted by the fine arts, were introduced into Athens; even while its tyrant was carefully collecting together the works of the prince of poets, baniſhed from within thy walls at once the artiſts and the arts, the learned and their learning!

This difference of conduct was ſufficiently diſtinguiſhed by the conſequential event. Athens became the ſeat of politeneſs and taſte;

* What are we to think, was the real opinion of the Athenians themſelves reſpecting eloquence, when they were ſo very careful to baniſh declamation from that upright tribunal, againſt whoſe deciſion their gods never appealed? What did the Romans think of phyſicians, when their art was prohibited in their republic? And when the remains of humanity left among the Spaniards induced them to forbid the exportation of lawyers to America, what idea muſt they have had of the ſcience of juriſprudence? May it not be ſaid that they imagined by this ſingle expedient, to make a reparation for all the outrages they had committed againſt the poor unhappy Indians?

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the country of orators and philoſophers. The elegance of its buildings was equal to that of its language; while on every ſide were preſented marble and canvas, animated by the hands of the moſt ſkilful artiſts. It is from Athens that we derive thoſe aſtoniſhing performances, which will ſerve as models to all ſucceeding corrupted ages. The picture of Lacedæmonia is not ſo highly coloured.

Of Sparta, the neighbouring nations obſerved, that "Men were there born virtuous; their native air ſeeming to inſpire them with virtue." But all its inhabitants have left us, is the memorial of their heroic actions: monuments that ſhould be eſteemed more valuable than the moſt curious relicks of the Athenian marbles.

It is true that, among the Athenians, there were ſome few wiſe men who withſtood the general torrent, and preſerved their integrity even in the company of the muſes. But let us attend to the judgment which the principal, and moſt unhappy of them, paſſed on the artiſts and literati of his time.

"I have examined the poets," ſays he, "and "I look upon them as people whoſe talents "impoſe both on themſelves and others; they "give themſelves out for wiſe men, and are "taken for ſuch; but in reality they are ſtrange "fools."

"From the poets," continues Socrates, "I "turned to the artiſts. Nobody was more ig-"norant of the arts than myſelf; and of "courſe nobody was more fully perſuaded that "the artiſts were poſſeſſed of amazing know-"ledge.

" ledge. I ſoon diſcovered, however, that " their ſituation was no better than that of the " poets; both the one and the other being ſub- " ject to the ſame prejudices. Becauſe the moſt " ſkilful of them excel others in their particu- " lar profeſſions, they think themſelves wiſer " than all the reſt of mankind. This arro- " gance, in my opinion, tarniſhed entirely " the luſtre of their knowledge; ſo that, tak- " ing upon me the prerogative of an oracle, " and aſking myſelf whether I had rather be " what I am or what they are, to know what " they know, or to know that I know no- " thing? I very readily anſwered, In the name " of God, let me remain as I am.

" We know none of us, neither the ſophiſts, " the poets, the orators, the artiſts, nor myſelf in " what conſiſts the *true*, the *good*, or the *beautiful*. " But there is this difference between us; that, " though none of theſe people know any thing, " they all conceit they know ſomething; where- " as for my part, if I know nothing, I make no " doubt of my ignorance. So the ſuperiority of " wiſdom, imputed to me by the oracle, is re- " duced merely to my being fully convinced " that I am ignorant of what I do not know."

Thus we find Socrates, the wiſeſt of men, in the opinion of an oracle, and the moſt learned of all the Athenians in the opinion of all Greece, making a profeſſed panegyric on ignorance. Were he now alive alſo, there is little reaſon to think that our modern ſcholars and artiſts would induce him to change his mind. No, gentlemen, that honeſt ſage would ſtill perſiſt in deſpiſing our vain ſciences. He would lend no aſſiſtance to ſwell the

the numerous catalogue of books, that flow in upon us from all quarters: but would leave us only, as he did heretofore to his disciples, the example and memorial of his virtues; the noblest method of instructing mankind.

Socrates began at Athens, and the elder Cato proceeded at Rome to inveigh against those seductive and subtile Greeks, who corrupted the virtue and diminished the courage of their fellow-citizens: the arts and sciences however still prevailed. Rome abounded with philosophers and orators, while its military discipline was neglected, agriculture was held in contempt, and patriotism gave place to the formation of parties. To the sacred names of liberty, and obedience to the laws, succeeded those of the founders of particular sects, as Epicurus, Zeno, and Arcesilas. It was even a saying among their own philosophers that "their men of learning had eclipsed their men of probity." Before that time the Romans were satisfied with the practice of virtue; and were undone when they began to study its theory.

What would the great soul of Fabricius have felt, if to his misfortune, he had been called back to life, to have seen the pomp and magnificence of that Rome, which his arm had saved from ruin, and his respectable name rendered more illustrious than all its conquests. "Ye gods! would he have said, what are be-
"come of those thatched roofs and rustic
"hearths, which were formerly the habitations
"of temperance and virtue? What fatal
"splendour hath succeeded the ancient Roman
"simplicity? What is this foreign language,
"this effeminacy of manners? What is the
"use

" uſe of theſe ſtatues, paintings and edifices? " Ye ſenſeleſs people, what is it you have done? " You, who are the lords and maſters of the " earth, have made yourſelves ſlaves to the fri- " volous nations ye have ſubdued. Ye are go- " verned merely by talkers and rhetoricians, " and it has been only to enrich architects, " painters, ſtatuaries and ſtage-players that you " have ſhed ſo much blood in the reduction of " Greece and Aſia. While even the ſpoils of " Carthage are become the reward of a flute- " player. Romans! Romans! haſten to de- " moliſh thoſe amphitheatres, break to pieces " thoſe marble ſtatues, burn thoſe paintings; " and drive from among you thoſe ſlaves who " keep you in ſubjection, and whoſe fatal arts " have corrupted your morals. Let others " render themſelves illuſtrious by ſuch vain " talents; the only talent worthy of Rome is " that of conquering the world and extending " the practice of virtue. When Cyneas took " the Roman ſenate for an aſſembly of kings, " he was not ſtruck either with uſeleſs pomp " or ſtudied elegance. He was not captivated " by that futile eloquence, which is now the " pride of your frivolous orators. What was " it then, which ſtruck Cyneas with the idea of " our ſenatorial majeſty? O, my fellow-ci- " tizens, he beheld a ſight, the nobleſt that " ever exiſted under heaven, a ſight which not " all your riches or your arts can produce; " this was an aſſembly of two hundred virtu- " ous men, worthy to command in Rome, and " to govern the world."

But

But let us lay aſide the diſtance of time and place, and examine what hath happened in our own time and country; or rather let us ſet aſide thoſe odious deſcriptions that may offend our delicacy, and ſpare ourſelves the pains of repeating the ſame circumſtances under different names. It was not for nothing that I invoked the name of Fabricius; for what have I put into his mouth, that might not have come with as much propriety from Lewis the twelfth or King Henry the IV. It is true that in France, Socrates would not have been compelled to drink poiſon, but he muſt have ſwallowed a potion infinitely more bitter, the moſt inſulting raillery and contempt, an hundred times worſe than death.

Thus it is that luxury, profligacy and ſlavery, have been, in all ages, the ſcourge of our ambitious endeavours to emerge out of that happy ſtate of ignorance, in which the wiſdom of providence had placed us. That thick veil with which it hath covered all its operations, ſeems to be a ſufficient proof that it never deſigned us for ſuch fruitleſs reſearches. But is there, indeed, one leſſon it hath taught us, that we have rightly profited by, or have not with impunity neglected? Be rightly inſtructed, however, for once, ye people, and know that nature would have preſerved you from ſcience, as a tender mother ſnatches a dangerous weapon out of the hands of her child. Know that all the ſecrets ſhe hides from you, are ſo many evils from which ſhe protects you; the very difficulty you experience in acquiring knowledge being a diſtinguiſhing mark of her benevolence towards

towards you. Mankind are naturally perverſe; but how much more ſo would they be, if they had the misfortune to be alſo born learned.

Theſe reflections are ſufficiently mortifying to the pride of human nature. What! will it be ſaid, is probity the child of ignorance? Is virtue inconſiſtent with ſcience? How fatal are the conſequences that flow from ſuch prepoſſeſſions! But to reconcile theſe apparent contradictions, we need only to examine nearly the emptineſs and vanity of thoſe pompous titles, which are ſo liberally beſtowed on human knowledge. Let us conſider, therefore, the arts and ſciences in themſelves. Let us trace the reſult of their progreſs, nor ſcruple to admit of thoſe points, in which our rational inductions ſhall be found to agree with thoſe deducible from hiſtory.

PART

PART THE SECOND.

AN ancient tradition paſſed out of Egypt into Greece, that ſome god, who was an enemy to the repoſe of mankind, was the inventor of the ſciences *. What muſt have been the opinion of the Egyptians, then, with whom the ſciences firſt took riſe; they who beheld, at a nearer diſtance, the ſource from whence they ſprung. In fact, whether we turn to the annals of the world, or ſubſtitute philoſophical inveſtigations inſtead of the uncertain chronicles of hiſtory, we ſhall not find the origin of human knowledge, anſwerable to the idea we are fond of entertaining of it at preſent. Aſtronomy was the effect of ſuperſtition; eloquence of ambition, hatred, falſehood and flattery; geometry of avarice; phyſics of an idle curioſity; and moral philoſophy, like all the reſt, of human pride. Thus the arts and ſciences

* It is eaſy to diſcover the allegory of the fable of Prometheus: and it does not appear that the Greeks, who chained him to mount Caucaſus, had a better opinion of him than the Ægyptians had of their god Teuthos. A certain ſatyr, ſays an ancient fabuliſt, the firſt time he ſaw a fire, was going to kiſs and embrace it; but Prometheus cried out to him to forbear, or otherwiſe his beard would rue it. It burns, ſays he, every thing that touches it.

owe their birth to our vices; we ſhould be leſs doubtful of their advantages, if they had ſprung from our virtues.

The default of their origin is, indeed, but too plainly ſeen in their objects. What would become of the arts, were they not cheriſhed by luxury? If men were not unjuſt, of what uſe were juriſprudence? What would become of hiſtory, if there were no tyrants, wars, nor conſpiracies? In a word, who would paſs his life in barren ſpeculations, if every body, attentive only to the obligations of humanity and the neceſſities of nature, employed themſelves ſolely in ſerving their country, obliging their friends, and relieving the unhappy? Are we then formed, it may be aſked, to live and die on the brink of that well in which Truth lies hid at the bottom? This reflection alone is, in my opinion, enough to diſcourage at firſt ſetting out, every man who ſeriouſly endeavours to inſtruct himſelf by the ſtudy of philoſophy.

What a variety of dangers ſurround us! What a number of wrong paths preſent themſelves in the inveſtigation of the ſciences! Through how many errors, more perilous than the truth itſelf is uſeful, muſt we not paſs to arrive at it? The diſadvantages we lie under are evident; for falſehood is capable of an infinite variety of combinations; but the truth hath but one ſimple way of being ſuch. Beſides, where is the man who ſincerely deſires to find it? Or even admitting his good will, by what characteriſtic marks is he ſure to know it? Amidſt that infinite diverſity of opinions which

which prevail in the world, where is the criterion * by which he may certainly judge of it? Again, what is ſtill more difficult, if we could even be fortunate enough to diſcover it, of us knows how to make a proper uſe of it?

If our ſciences, alſo, are futile in the objects they propoſe, they are no leſs dangerous in the effects they produce. Being themſelves the effect of indolence, they generate idleneſs in turn; and an irreparable loſs of time, is the firſt prejudice they muſt neceſſarily be of to ſociety. To live without doing ſome good, is a great evil as well in the political as in the moral world; and hence an uſeleſs citizen ſhould ever be regarded as a very pernicious member of ſociety. Anſwer me then, ye illuſtrious philoſophers, you, of whom we learn the ratios in which attraction acts in vacuo; and in the revolution of the planets, deſcribing equal ſpaces in equal times; you, of whom we are taught how the ſoul and body correſpond like two watches without actual communication with each other; what planets are inhabited; and what inſects are capable of reproduction. Anſwer me, I ſay, you from whom we receive all this ſublime information, whether we ſhould have been leſs numerous, worſe governed, leſs

* The leſs we know, the more we think we know. The peripatetics doubted of nothing. Deſcartes conſtructed an univerſe with cubes and vortices. And there is ſcarce a minute philoſopher in Europe, who does not boldly explain the inexplicable myſteries of electricity, which will perhaps be ever deſpaired of by real philoſophers.

for-

[illegible]dable, leſs flouriſhing, or more perverſe, [illegible]ing you had taught us none of all theſe [illegible]ings.

[illegible]ede then from the pretended importance of your productions; and, ſince the labours of the moſt enlightened among the learned and [illegible]ong the moſt virtuous of our citizens, are of [illegible]ittle public utility, acknowledge what we [illegible]ght to think of that numerous herd of ob[illegible] writers and uſeleſs literati, who live idly [illegible] the ſubſtance of the ſtate.

[illegible]dly, do I ſay? Would to God they were [illegible]ally idle. Society would be more peaceful, [illegible] manners leſs corrupt. But theſe vain [illegible]d futile declaimers go forth on all ſides, arm[illegible] with fatal paradoxes, to ſap the foundation [illegible] faith, and eradicate the principles of vir[illegible]. They contemptuouſly deride the anti[illegible]d names of patriotiſm and religion; con[illegible]ating their talents and philoſophy to the de[illegible]ſtion and abolition of every thing that is [illegible]held sacred among mankind. Not that they [illegible] any real hatred to religion or virtue; they [illegible] enemies only to the public opinion; and [illegible] readily become Chriſtians if they were [illegible] to a country of Atheiſts. What ex[illegible]ravagancies will not the rage of ſingularity in[illegible]uce men to commit!

[illegible]buſe of time is certainly a great evil; [illegible] greater evils attend upon literature and [illegible]arts. Such is luxury, produced like them [illegible]olence and vanity. Luxury is ſeldom [illegible]attended by the arts and ſciences; but theſe [illegible] ever attended by luxury. I am not to learn [illegible] modern philoſophy, fertile in paradoxes, [illegible] in contradiction to the experience of

ages, that luxury contributes to the sp... of a state. But, without insisting on ... pediency of sumptuary laws, can it be ... that rectitude of morals is essential to ... ration of empires, and that luxury is ... trically opposite to such rectitude? I ... admitted that luxury is a certain indica... wealth; that it even serves, if you will ... crease such wealth: what conclusion ... drawn from this paradox, so worthy ... times? And what will become of ... riches are to be acquired at any rate? ... liticians among the ancients were alwa... ing of morals and virtue; ours speak of ... else but commerce and money. One ... gravely tells us that in such a country a ... worth just as much as he will sell fo... giers: another, pursuing the same m... calculation, finds that in some countries ... is worth nothing, and in others still le... nothing; thus valuing men as they do ... of oxen. According to these estimators ... is worth no more to the state, than in ... tion to his consumption; and thus a ... would be worth at least thirty Lacedæm... Let these writers tell me, however, which ... two republics Sybaris or Sparta was su... an handful of peasants, and which of t... came the terror of Asia.

The monarchy of Cyrus was conq... thirty thousand men, led on by a prince ... than the meanest of the Persian Satra... like manner the Scythians, the most ind... all nations, were found capable of re... most powerful monarchs of the universe ... two famous republicks contended for th...

of the world, the one rich and the other poor, the former was ſubdued by the latter. The Roman empire in its turn, after having accumulated to itſelf all the riches of the univerſe, became the ſpoil of a people who knew not even what riches were. The Franks conquered the Gauls, and the Saxons England, without any other treaſures than their bravery and poverty. A band of poor mountaineers, whoſe avidity was confined to the poſſeſſion of a few ſheepſkins, having firſt given a check to the arrogance of Auſtria, went on to cruſh the opulent and formidable houſe of Burgundy, which at that time made the potentates of Europe to tremble. In fine, not all the power and wiſdom of the heir to Charles the fifth, ſupported even by the treaſures of the Indies, could ſuppreſs the revolt of a few herring-fiſhers in the Netherlands. Let our ſpeculative politicians condeſcend to lay aſide their calculations for a moment, to reflect on theſe examples; whence they may learn that money, though it buys every thing elſe, cannot purchaſe good morals and virtuous citizens. What is then the preciſe point in diſpute regarding luxury? It is to know which is moſt advantageous to ſtates, to have a brilliant and momentary exiſtence, or to be virtuous and durable? I ſay to be brilliant, but with what luſtre! A taſte for oſtentation never prevails in thoſe minds which delight in probity. No, it is impoſſible that underſtandings, contracted by a multitude of frivolous occupations, ſhould ever be elevated to what is truly great and noble; nay even if they had the power, they would want the fortitude to exert it.

Every artiſt is covetous of applauſe. The applauſe of his contemporaries conſtitutes a valuable part of his recompenſe. What muſt he do then to obtain it, if he have the misfortune to be born among a people, and at a time, when literature being in vogue, even ſuperficial youth are qualified to lead the faſhion; when men ſacrifice their taſte to the tyrants of their liberty, and one ſex dares not approve any thing but what is agreeable to the puſillanimity of the other *; when the greateſt maſterpieces of the drama are condemned, and the nobleſt of muſical productions neglected? This, gentlemen, he will do. He will lower his genius to the level of the age, and will rather ſubmit to compoſe ordinary productions, that may be admired during his life-time, than labour at ſublime performances which will not be admired till after his death. Tell us, Vol-

* I am far from thinking that the aſcendant which the women have obtained over the men, is an evil in itſelf. It is a preſent which nature hath made them for the good of mankind. If better directed, it might be productive of as much good, as it is now of evil. We are not ſufficiently ſenſible of what advantage it would be to ſociety to give a better education to that half of our ſpecies which governs the other. The men will always do what is pleaſing to the women. If you require therefore that the former ſhould be noble and virtuous, let the women be taught what greatneſs of ſoul and virtue are. The reflections which this ſubject would furniſh, and which Plato formerly intimated, deſerve to be more fully developed by a pen worthy to write after ſo great a maſter, and to defend ſo great a cauſe.

taire,

taire, how many nervous and maſculine beauties you have ſacrificed to the falſe delicacy of our times; tell us how many great and noble ſtrokes you have ſuppreſſed, in compliance to that ſpirit of modern gallantry, which delights in what is frivolous and little.

It is thus that a relaxation in morals, the neceſſary conſequence of luxury, brings with it of courſe a corruption of taſte. If by chance, alſo, there be found among the men of genius, an individual who hath fortitude enough to refuſe to comply with the taſte of the age, and to debaſe himſelf by puerile productions; hard will be his lot, to live and die in indigence and be buried in oblivion. Ah! why is this not rather a mere prediction, than a fact already confirmed by experience! Yes, thou admirable Carle Pierre, the time is already come when that pencil of thine, deſtined to increaſe the majeſty of our temples, by ſublime and ſacred repreſentations, muſt be thrown aſide, or be proſtituted to adorn the pannels of our coaches with wanton deſigns and laſcivious paintings. And thou, inimitable Pygal, rival of Phidias and Praxiteles; thou, whoſe chiſſel would have been employed among the antients to carve them gods, whoſe images would almoſt have excuſed their idolatry; yes, even thy maſterly hand muſt condeſcend to faſhion baubles and monſters, or remain idle.

We cannot reflect on the manners of mankind, without contemplating with pleaſure the picture of that ſimplicity which prevailed in the primitive ages. This picture may be juſtly compared to that of a beautiful coaſt, adorned alone by the hands of nature; towards which

our eyes are conſtantly turned, and from which we perceive ourſelves departing with reluctance. While men were innocent and virtuous, they loved to have the gods for witneſſes of their actions, and therefore they dwelt together in the ſame ruſtic habitations; but when they became vicious, they grew tired of ſuch officious ſpectators, and baniſhed them to magnificent temples. At length, therefore, they expelled their deities even from theſe; at leaſt the temples of the gods were no more magnificent than the palaces of the citizens. This was the height of depravation; nor could the vices ever be carried a greater length than when they were ſeen, ſupported, as it were, at the doors of the great, on columns of marble and engraven on Corinthian capitals.

As the conveniences of life increaſe, the arts are brought to perfection, and luxury of courſe prevails; true courage flags; the virtues diſappear; and all this is the effect of the ſciences and of thoſe arts which are exerciſed in the obſcurity of the cloſet. When the Goths ravaged Greece, the libraries eſcaped the flames merely from an opinion propagated among them, that it was improper to diveſt the enemy of thoſe means which diverted their attention from military exerciſes, and kept it engaged by indolent and ſedentary occupations.

Charles the eighth made himſelf maſter of Tuſcany and the kingdoms of Naples, almoſt without drawing his ſword; this unexpected ſucceſs being imputed, by the whole court, to the Italian nobility's having applied with greater earneſtneſs to the ſtudy of the ſciences than to martial purſuits. In fact, ſays the ſenſible relator

lator of the laſt two remarks, experience plainly evinces, that an application to the ſciences tends rather to make men effeminate and daſtardly than reſolute and vigorous.

The Romans confeſſed that military virtue was extinguiſhed among them, in proportion as they began to grow connoiſſeurs in painting, ſculpture, and the reſt of the fine arts. Nay, as if this celebrated country was to be for ever an example to other nations, the revival of letters hath again demoliſhed, and perhaps for ever, the martial reputation which Italy ſeemed a few centuries ago to have recovered.

The ancient republicks of Greece, with that wiſdom which was ſo conſpicuous in moſt of their inſtitutions, prohibited all thoſe inactive and ſedentary employments, which by enervating the body diminiſhed alſo the vigour of the mind. With what courage, in fact, can it be thought that hunger and thirſt, fatigues, dangers and death, can be confronted by men, who are ſhocked at the malleſt difficulty and depreſſed with the ſlighteſt pain? With what reſolution can ſoldiers ſupport the exceſſive toils of war, when they are entirely unaccuſtomed to them? With what ſpirits can they make forced marches againſt the enemy under the command of officers, who have not even the ſtrength to travel on horſeback? To this may be objected many celebrated inſtances of valour in officers artificially trained up in the modern diſcipline of war. But, however juſtly they may boaſt their bravery in the field, and on the day of battle, they will prudently be ſilent on their ability to ſupport exceſſive fatigue, the rigour

of the seasons and the inclemency of the weather. A little sunshine or snow, or the want of a few superfluities, is sufficient to destroy one of our finest armies in a few days. Intrepid warriors! permit me for once to tell you the truth, which you seldom hear. Of your bravery I am fully satisfied. I have no doubt that you would have triumphed with Hannibal at Cannæ, and at Thrasimen: that you would have passed the Rubicon with Cæsar, and enabled him to enslave his country; but you never would have been able to have crossed the Alps with the former, or to subdue the Gauls with the latter.

The success of a war does not always depend on the events of battle: but there is in generalship an art superior to that of gaining victories. A man may behave with great intrepidity in the field, and yet be a very indifferent officer. Even in the common soldier, a little more strength and vigour would perhaps be more useful than so much courage; which after all cannot secure him from death. And what imports it to the state whether its troops perish by colds and fevers, or by the sword of the enemy?

Again, if the cultivation of the sciences be prejudicial to military qualifications, it is still more so to moral qualities. Hence an absurd mode of education serves, even from our infancy, to improve our wit and corrupt our understanding. We see, on every side, great institutions, where youth are educated at a great expence, and instructed in every thing but their duty. Your children are kept ignorant of their own language, while they are taught to speak others of no manner of use. In like manner they

they learn to make verſes which they can hardly underſtand; and, without being capable to diſtinguiſh truth from error, are taught the art of diſguiſing them to others by argumentative ſophiſtry. But with regard to magnanimity, equity, temperance, humanity, courage, they are words of which they know not the meaning. The pleaſing name of patriot never reaches their ear; and if they ever hear the name of God *, it is to hear him repreſented as an object of terror rather than of reverence. I ſhould as lieve, ſaid a very ſenſible tutor on this occaſion, that my pupil had ſpent his time in the tennis court as in this manner; as there he would at leaſt have acquired an active diſpoſition of body.

I well know that children ought to be employed, and that idleneſs is to them of dangerous conſequence. But what ſhould they be employed about! What ſhould they be taught! This is undoubtedly an important queſtion. Let them be taught what they are to practiſe when they come to be men †; not what they are to forget before they come to man's eſtate.

Our

* Penſees philoſophiques.

† Such was the education of the Spartans with regard to one of the greateſt of their kings. It is well worth obſervance, ſays Montaigne, that the excellent inſtitutions of Lycurgus, which were in truth miraculouſly perfect, were ſo attentive to the bringing up of youth as if this were their principal object, yet make no mention of learning: as if their generous-ſpirited youth, diſdaining every other reſtraint, required, inſtead of maſters of the arts and ſcientific pedagogues, liberal inſtructors in valour, prudence and juſtice.

Our gardens are embelliſhed with ſtatues and our galleries with pictures. What do you ima-

Let us hear next what the ſame writer ſays of the Perſians. Plato, ſays he, relates that the preſumptive heir to the crown was thus brought up. At his birth he was committed, not to the care of the women, but to thoſe eunuchs who were in higheſt authority and eſteem with the king, on account of their virtue. Theſe undertook to render his body beautiful and healthy At ſeven years of age they taught him to ride and go a hunting. At fourteen he was placed under the tuition of four, the moſt wiſe, juſt, temperate and brave perſons in the kingdom. The firſt inſtructed him in religion, the ſecond taught him to adhere inviolably to truth; the third to conquer his paſſions, and the fourth to be afraid of nothing. All, I may add, taught him to be a good man; but not one taught him to be learned.

Aſtyages, in Zenophon, deſires Cyrus to give him an account of his laſt leſſon. It was this, anſwered Cyrus, one of the great boys of the ſchool having a little coat, gave it to a little boy and took away from him his coat which was larger. Our preceptor having appointed me arbiter in the diſpute, I ordered that matters ſhould ſtand as they were, as each boy ſeemed to be better accommodated than before. The maſter remonſtrated, however, againſt my ſentence; alledging that I conſidered only the propriety of things; whereas juſtice ought firſt to have been regarded: by the firſt principle of which we are taught that none ſhould be diveſted of their property by force and violence: adding, that he was puniſhed for his wrong deciſion, juſt as the boys are puniſhed in our country ſchools when they forget the firſt aoriſt of τύπτω. My governor muſt make me a fine oration, *in genere demonſtrativo*, before he will perſuade me that his ſchool is as good as this.

gine

gine these master-pieces of art, thus exhibited to public admiration, represent? The great men, who have defended our country, or the still greater men who have enriched it by their virtues? No, they are the extravagant images of loose desires and perverted understandings, carefully selected from the ancient mythology, and presented to the early curiosity of our children, doubtless that they may have in view the representations of vicious actions, before they have learned to read the history of them.

Whence arise all those abuses, unless it be from that fatal inequality introduced among men, by the difference of talents and the depression of virtue. Such is the most evident effect of all our studies, and the most dangerous of all their consequences. The question is no longer, is he a man of probity? but, is he a man of ingenuity? We ask not of a book, whether it be useful? but whether it be well written? Premiums are lavished on wit and ingenuity, while virtue is left to its own reward. Numerous are the prizes offered for fine writings, none for good actions. I should be glad however to know whether the honour of obtaining the prize of the academy, is any degree comparable to the merit of having instituted it.

A wise man is not eager after the gifts of fortune; but he is by no means insensible to glory, and when he sees it so ill distributed, his virtues, which might have been animated by a little emulation, and rendered advantageous to society, droops and dies away in obscurity and indigence. It is from this cause, that the agreeable arts must in time necessarily be pre-

ferred to the useful; a circumstance which has been but too much confirmed since the revival of the arts and sciences. We have natural philosophers, geometricians, chymists, astronomers, poets, musicians, and painters in plenty; but we have no longer a true patriot amongst us; or if there be found a few dispersed up and down the country, they are left to perish in their native poverty unnoticed and neglected. Such is the situation to which we are reduced. And such are our sentiments with regard to those, who give us our daily bread, and afford us nourishment for our children.

I confess, however, that the evil is not so great as it might have been. Allwise providence, by placing salutary simples near noxious plants, and by making poisonous animals contain their own antidote, hath taught the sovereigns of the earth, who are his ministers, to imitate his wisdom. It is by following this example that the truly great monarch, to whose glory every succeeding age will add new lustre, drew from the very bosom of the arts and sciences, the very fountains of corruption, those famous societies, which, while they are depositaries of that dangerous trust the sciences, are yet the sacred guardians of our morals, by their attention to maintain a purity of manners among themselves, and requiring it in every candidate as the condition of his admittance into their society.

These wise institutions, confirmed by his august successor and imitated by all the princes of Europe, will serve at least as a restraint on men of letters, who all aspiring to the honour of being admitted into these academies, will of

course

courſe have an eye to their moral conduct, and endeavour to merit ſuch honour by uſeful performances and irreproachable manners. Thoſe academies alſo, which, propoſing prizes for literary merit, ſhall make choice of ſuch ſubjects, as are adapted to incite their countrymen to virtue, prove that it prevails in themſelves, and muſt give us a ſenſible and ſingular pleaſure to find that ſuch learned ſocieties devote their time to enlighten mankind, not only by ſuch inſtructions as are agreeable, but by thoſe which are uſeful.

Let not an objection be ſtarted, therefore, which is only an additional proof of my argument. So much precaution proves but too evidently the neceſſity of taking it. We never look out for remedies againſt ills that do not exiſt. Wherefore, indeed, do theſe bear all the marks of mere ordinary remedies, on account of their inefficacy? The numerous eſtabliſhments in favour of the learned, are only adapted to make men miſtake the objects of the ſciences, while they engage our attention to the cultivation of them. One would be apt to think, from the precautions every where taken, that we are overſtocked with huſbandmen, and are afraid of wanting philoſophers. I will not venture here to enter into a compariſon between agriculture and philoſophy, as they would not bear it. I ſhall only aſk what is philoſophy? What is there contained in the writings of the moſt celebrated philoſophers? What are the inſtructions of theſe great friends of wiſdom. If we pay them any attention, ſhall we not take them for ſo many mountebanks, exhibiting themſelves in public, and crying

crying out, *in here, in here, come to me, I am the only true doctor?* One of them teaches that there is no such thing in the world as matter, but that every thing is merely representative. Another declares that there is no other substance than matter, and no other God than the world itself. A third tells you that there is no such thing in nature as virtue and vice, but that moral good and evil are only chimerical; while a fourth informs you that men are only beasts of prey, and may conscientiously devour each other. Oh why, ye great philosophers, do you not reserve these wise and profitable lessons for your friends and children: you would soon reap the benefit of them, nor should we be under any apprehensions of ours becoming your disciples.

Such are the wonderful men, whom their contemporaries held in the highest esteem during their lives, and to whom immortality hath been attributed since their decease. Such are the wise maxims we have received from them, and which are transmitted from age to age, to posterity. Paganism, though polluted with all the extravagances of human reason, hath left nothing equal to the shameful monuments which have been erected by the art of printing, during the reign of the gospel. The impious writings of Leucippus and Diagoras perished with their authors. The world, in their days, were ignorant of the art of immortalizing the errors and extravagancies of the human mind. But thanks to the art of printing * and the use we

* If we consider the horrid disorders which the art of printing hath already caused in Europe, and judge

we make of it, the pernicious reveries of Hobbes and Spinoſa will laſt for ever. Hence with thoſe celebrated writings, of which the ignorance and ruſticity of our forefathers were incapable! Hence with them to our deſcendants, accompanied by thoſe writings, ſtill more pernicious, which ariſe from the corrupted manners of the preſent age! Let them convey to poſterity a faithful hiſtory of the progreſs and advantages of our arts and ſciences. If they are read, they will leave not a doubt about the queſtion now diſcuſſed: and unleſs mankind ſhould then be ſtill more abſurd than we, they will lift up their eyes to heaven and

judge of the future by the evils that daily reſult from it, it is eaſy to foreſee that ſovereigns will hereafter take as much pains to ſuppreſs, as they ever took to encourage it. The Sultan Achmet, yielding to the importunities of certain pretenders to taſte, conſented to have a preſs erected at Conſtantinople; but it was hardly ſet to work before they were obliged to deſtroy it, and throw the preſs and types into a well.

It is related that the Calif Omar, being aſked what ſhould be done with the library at Alexandria, anſwered in theſe words. "If the books in the library contain any thing contrary to the Alcoran, they are naught and ought to be burnt; if they contain the doctrines of the Alcoran, they are uſeleſs and ought to be burnt likewiſe." This reaſoning has been cited by our men of letters as the height of abſurdity; but if Gregory the Great had been in the place of Omar, and the Goſpel in the place of the Alcoran, the library would have been in like manner committed to the flames; and it would have been one of the moſt brilliant actions of his life.

exclaim in bitterneſs of heart: "Almighty "God! thou who diſpoſeth of the under- "ſtandings of men, deliver us not up to the "fatal arts and ſciences of our forefathers; "but reſtore us to ignorance, innocence and "indigence, which alone can make us happy "and are precious in thy ſight."

But if the progreſs of the arts and ſciences has added nothing to our real happineſs; if on the other hand it has corrupted our morals, and if that corruption has vitiated our taſte, what are we to think of the herd of inſtitutionary authors who have removed thoſe impediments which nature purpoſely laid in the way to the Temple of the muſes, in order to try the powers of thoſe who might be tempted to ſeek knowledge? What ſhall we think alſo of thoſe compilers who have indiſcreetly opened a door to the ſciences, and have introduced into their ſanctuary a populace unworthy to approach it, when it was greatly to be wiſhed that all who ſhould be found incapable of making a conſiderable progreſs in the ſciences, were repulſed at their firſt ſetting out, and thereby induced to apply themſelves to employments more beneficial to ſociety. A man who ſhould remain all his life-time a poor verſifier, or a ſecond-rate geometrician, might have made nevertheleſs an excellent clothier. Thoſe whom nature intended for ſcholars, have no need of a maſter. Verulam, Deſcartes and Newton, thoſe preceptors of mankind, had no preceptors themſelves. What guide could indeed have conducted them ſo far as their ſublime genius directed? Ordinary maſters would only have cramped their abilities, by confining them within

in the narrow limits of their own capacity. It was from the obſtacles they met with at firſt, that they learned to exert themſelves, and thence to traverſe the vaſt field they went over. If it be proper for ſome men to apply to the ſtudy of the arts and ſciences, it is only for thoſe who perceive themſelves capable of proceeding on their own ſtrength. It belongs only to theſe happy few, to erect monuments of glory to the human underſtanding. But if we are deſirous that nothing ſhould be above their genius, nothing ſhould be beyond their hopes. This is the only encouragement they require. The ſoul inſenſibly adapts itſelf to the objects on which it is employed, and thus it is that great occaſions always have produced great men. The greateſt orator in the world was Conſul of Rome, and perhaps the greateſt of philoſophers Lord Chancellor of England. Can it be conceived that if the former had only been a profeſſor at an univerſity, and the latter a penſioner of an academy; can it be conceived, I ſay, that in ſuch caſe their works would not have ſuffered from their ſituation. Let not princes diſdain to admit into their councils thoſe, who are the moſt capable of adviſing them. Let them renounce that antiquated prepoſſeſſion, originally ariſing from the ambition of the Great, that the art of governing mankind is more difficult than that of inſtructing them; as if it was more eaſy to induce men to do good voluntarily, than to compel them to it by force. Let the learned of the firſt rank in merit find an honourable aſylum in their courts; let them there enjoy the only recompenſe they deſerve, that of promoting by their influence the happineſs

pineſs of a people whom they have enlightened by their wiſdom. It is in this caſe only that we are likely to ſee what virtue, ſcience and power can do, when animated by the nobleſt emulation, and unanimouſly promoting the happineſs of mankind.

But ſo long as power only remains on one ſide, and knowledge and underſtanding on the other, the learned will ſeldom make great objects their ſtudy, princes will ſtill more rarely do great actions, and the common people will continue to be, as they are, mean, corrupt and miſerable.

As for us, ordinary men, on whom heaven has not been pleaſed to beſtow ſuperior talents; as we are not deſtined to reap ſuch glory, let us be contented to remain in obſcurity. Let us not covet a reputation we ſhould never attain; and which, in the preſent ſtate of things, would never make up to us for the trouble it might coſt, even if we were qualified to obtain it. Why ſhould we build our happineſs on the opinions of others, when we poſſeſs a ſolid foundation for it in our own breaſts? Let us leave to others the taſk of inſtructing mankind in their duty, and confine ourſelves to the diſcharge of our own. We have no occaſion for greater knowledge than this.

Hail virtue! thou ſublime ſcience of ſimple minds; ſay, if ſo much induſtry and preparation is neceſſary to become acquainted with thee. Are not thy principles engraven on every heart? Need we do more, to learn thy laws, than to examine ourſelves, and liſten to the voice of conſcience, when the paſſions are at reſt?

This

This is the true philoſophy, with which we ſhould learn to reſt ſatisfied, without envying the fame of thoſe celebrated men, who have immortalized their names in the republic of letters. Let us, inſtead of envying them, endeavour to make that honourable diſtinction between them and us, which was formerly obſerved to ſubſiſt between thoſe two powerful ſtates, Athens and Sparta; viz. that the one knew what was right, and the other practiſed it.

OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

ANSWER that hath been made to the foregoing DISCOURSE.

I Owe rather thanks than a reply to the anonymous author, who hath done me the honour of writing an anſwer to my diſſertation. But a due ſenſe of my acknowledgments muſt not make me forget what I alſo owe to truth. Neither can I ever forget that in holding a rational argument, men enter into a ſtate of nature, and reſume their primitive equality.

The tract, which I am about to anſwer, abounds with demonſtrative truths to which I can make no manner of reply. For, however qualified I might be to play the ſophiſt, I ſhould be very ſorry to be one of thoſe who have an anſwer for every thing.

But my defence will not be the leſs eaſy; as it will be confined to a mere compariſon of my own ſentiments with the truths which are objected to them; for if I prove that the latter do not really attack what I have advanced, I ſhall think the former are ſufficiently defended.

All the propoſitions eſtabliſhed by my adverſary, may be reduced to two principal points; the

the one containing a commendation of the ſciences, the other treating of their abuſe. I ſhall examine each apart.

It ſeems, by the manner of the anſwer, that my opponent would have been pleaſed if I had ſaid more againſt the ſciences than I have really done. It is ſuppoſed that the eulogium, I made on the ſciences at firſt ſetting out, muſt have been much againſt my will; it is, ſays my antagoniſt, a confeſſion forced from me by the truth, which I ſpeedily haſtened to retract.

But if this confeſſion be an eulogium which truth hath forced from me, it muſt be granted that I thought the ſciences as good as I repreſented them: ſo that the author's praiſe of them is not contradictory to my opinion.

That confeſſion, it is ſaid, was forced from me: ſo much the better for my cauſe; for that ſhews that truth hath a greater influence over me than my own inclination. But how does that acknowledgment in favour of the ſciences, appear to be involuntary? Is it becauſe it is done with an ill grace? It would be terrible to judge of the ſincerity of authors by ſuch new and unprecedented principles. Is it becauſe it is too ſhort? I could very eaſily have ſaid leſs to the purpoſe in a greater number of pages. Will it be ſaid, it is becauſe I have retracted it? I muſt confeſs I am ignorant that I have any where done this; and all I can reply to this, is, that I am ſure I did not intend it.

It is evident that knowledge in itſelf is valuable; a man muſt give up all pretenſions to common ſenſe to affirm the contrary. The Author of all things, is the fountain of truth; omniſcience is one of his divine attributes.

To

To acquire knowledge, therefore, is, in ſome degree, to participate of his ſupreme intelligence. It is in this ſenſe that I have commended knowledge, and it is in this ſenſe that I commend my adverſary. But he expatiates farther on the ſeveral modes of utility, which the arts and ſciences may be of, to mankind: and I ſhould very readily have done the ſame, had it come within my deſign. So that ſo far we are perfectly agreed.

But the queſtion is, how comes it about that the ſciences, whoſe ſource is ſo pure, and whoſe end is ſo laudable, ſhould give riſe to ſo many impieties, hereſies, errours, abſurdities, contradictions and puerilities, to ſo many bitter ſatires, wretched romances, licentious poems, and obſcene books; and in thoſe who cultivate them, to ſo much pride, avarice, malignity, jealouſly, calumny, falſhood, ſervility and flattery? To this I anſwer, that it is becauſe ſcience, ſublime and beautiful as it is, was not made for man: his genius is too confined to make any great progreſs in it, and his paſſions are too ungovernable not to make a bad uſe of it. It is enough for him to ſtudy his duty, for which nature hath furniſhed every man with ſufficient capacity. My antagoniſt allows, on his part, that the ſciences become hurtful when they are abuſed, and that many perſons do really abuſe them. I imagine that in this particular, we ſhall not be thought to differ very widely. I add, it is true, that they are very much abuſed, and that they are always and univerſally ſo; and it does not appear to me that the contrary is made plain in my adverſary's tract.

I can ſafely take upon me to aver, therefore, that our principles, and of courſe all the propoſitions

ſitions deducible from them, are nothing contrary; which is what I endeavoured to prove. Our concluſions, nevertheleſs, when we come to form our inferences, are quite contradictory. Mine is, that, as the ſciences do more harm to our morals than good to ſociety, it is to be wiſhed that mankind did not ſo ardently proſecute them. That of my opponent is, that, although the ſciences are hurtful, yet they ſhould ſtill be cultivated on account of their being uſeful. I appeal, not to the public, but to the few real philoſophers that are in the world, to determine which of theſe two inferences ſhould be preferred.

I have ſome other ſlight obſervations to make, on ſome paſſages in his anſwer; which appear to me to want ſomething of that juſtice of reaſoning, which I admire in other parts of it, and which may have contributed to the erroneous conſequence the author has deduced.

The work begins with ſome perſonalities, which I ſhall take notice of only when they affect the ſubject in diſpute: the writer does me the honour of many commendations; which doubtleſs opens to me a fine field; but there is too little conſiſtence in theſe things. A reſpectful ſilence with regard to the object of our admiration, has often much greater propriety than indiſcreet commendation*.

My

* Sovereigns, good or bad, will be all indiſcriminately and ſervilely commended, ſo long as there are courtiers or men of letters. As to thoſe princes who are great men, their panegyrics are more moderate and refined. Flattery is offenſive to their virtue,

My diſſertation, it is ſaid, hath ſomething in it very ſurpriſing*. This, I think, requires ſome explanation. It is thought very ſurpriſing alſo that it ſhould obtain the prize. It is, however, no prodigy, to ſee very indifferent performances thus honoured. Take the affair in any other light, this ſurprize muſt be as favourable to the academy of Dijon, as injurious to the integrity of academies in general; and it is eaſy to perceive how I could turn it to the advantage of my own cauſe.

I am charged, in a very injurious manner, with a contradiction between my conduct and my doctrine; and reproached for having myſelf

virtue, and applauſe is injurious to their glory. This I know, at leaſt, that Trajan would have been, in my opinion, a much greater man, if Pliny had never written. Had Alexander been in reality what he affected to appear, he would never have troubled himſelf about his portrait nor his ſtatue: but would have left the Lacedemonians to write his panegyric, or have gone without one. The only eulogium worthy of a king is that which is heard, not from the mercenary lips of an orator, but from the mouth of a free people.

* It is the queſtion itſelf poſſibly that ſurpriſes; being one of the moſt noble and intereſting that ever was diſcuſſed, and which may not be ſpeedily repeated. The French academy have propoſed, as the prize of elocution, for 1752, a ſubject very ſimilar. This is that the love of literature inſpires a love to virtue. The academy very prudently thought it expedient, not to leave a propoſition of that kind problematical: on this occaſion alſo they have allotted twice the uſual time hitherto allowed to treat the moſt difficult ſubjects.

cultivated

cultivated the ſciences I condemn †. If virtue and ſcience are incompatible, as it is pretended that I endeavour to prove, I am aſked, and that with great earneſtneſs, how I venture to employ the one, in declaring for the other.

There is a good deal of addreſs in bringing me thus perſonally into the queſtion; as this perſonality cannot fail to throw ſome little embarraſſment on my anſwers; for unhappily I have more than one to make. In doing this, I ſhall endeavour to make preciſion ſupply the want of entertainment.

In the firſt place, I have ventured to advance, and imagine I have proved, that the cultivation of the ſciences introduces a corruption of morals among a nation in general. But how could I venture to ſay that virtue and ſcience were incompatible in a ſimple individual? I, who have exhorted princes to invite the truly learned to their courts; and to put confidence in them, in order that they might for once ſee how far ſcience and virtue united might contribute to the happineſs of mankind. The truly learned, it is true, are few in number: for to be able to put ſcience to its proper uſe, requires great ta-

† I cannot juſtify myſelf here, as many others may, by ſaying, that our education does not depend on ourſelves, and that we are not conſulted before we are corrupted. I very willingly applied to ſtudy, and ſtill more willingly abandoned it, when I perceived the diſturbance it gave my mind without being of any advantage to my underſtanding. I would have nothing to do with a fallacious employment, in which one imagines he is doing great things for wiſdom, in doing every thing for vanity.

lents and great virtues. Now, though their union may be hoped for in some few privileged minds, it cannot be expected of a whole people. It cannot therefore be concluded from my premises that a man may not be learned and virtuous at the same time.

2. The personal objection against my inconsistency of conduct, ought not to be enforced against me, even though it really existed. I revere the maxims and principles of virtue; of this my heart bears me witness: at the same time, however, it is but too sensible how far the love of virtue is from the practice of it. Besides, I am very far from being a man of science, and still farther from affecting it. I should have thought the ingenuous confession, I made at the beginning of my dissertation, might have secured me from this imputation; being rather apprehensive that I should be charged with presumption for pretending to judge of things of which I was ignorant. It is easy to perceive I could not be liable to both these reproaches at once. Not that I am certain they will not be both united, if I do not hasten to pass condemnation on this, however little I have deserved it.

3. I might quote, on this subject, what the fathers of the Christian church have said, with regard to that worldly knowlege, which they despised, and which they employed nevertheless in their disputes with the philosophical pagans. I might cite the comparison they make of the vessels of which the Israelites spoiled the Egyptians: but I content myself with only proposing one question, as my answer. Suppose a person should come with an intent to kill me, and that I should be so lucky as to wrest his weapon from him;

him; is it not lawful for me, before I throw it away, to use it to drive away the assassin.

Again, if the inconsistency with which I am charged hath no existence, it is not necessary to suppose that I intended only to amuse myself with a frivolous paradox; and this appears to me still the less necessary, as the style and manner of my writing, however poor or indifferent, were not then employed in works of mere amusement.

It is time to close what I have to say of myself; one never gets any thing by egotisms; which is a species of indiscretion that the public hardly ever excuses, even when we are forced upon them. The truth is so independent both of those who attack, and those who defend it, that these authors ought reciprocally to forget each other; which would be a means of sparing them a great deal of paper and ink. But this rule, so easy to practise with me, is not so with regard to my adversary, and this is a difference which is not at all to the advantage of my reply.

The author, observing that I attack the arts and sciences, on account of their effects on morals, employs, by way of reply, the enumeration of the various uses of them to different states; just as if in justification of a criminal, he had contented himself with proving, that he was very well in health, very ingenious, or very rich. Let it be admitted me, that the arts and sciences tend to make us very dishonest people, and I shall not dispute that they are otherwise very convenient and agreeable: this is an additional conformity they have with most of our vices.

The author goes farther, and pretends that ſtudy is neceſſary to enable us to admire the beauties of nature; and that thoſe of the univerſe expoſed, as it appears, to the eyes of all, for the inſtruction of the ſimple, yet require a good deal of knowledge in the obſervers to be even perceived. I confeſs that this propoſition aſtoniſhes me. Can it be ordained that all mankind ſhould be philoſophers, or is it ordained that philoſophers only can believe in God? The ſcripture exhorts, in many places, to adore the greatneſs and goodneſs of God, in his marvellous works; but I don't know that it any where commands us to ſtudy natural philoſophy: nor do I think that the Author of nature is leſs adored by me, who know nothing, than by him who knows every tree and plant from the cedar to the hyſſop, and every inſect and animal from the mite to the elephant.

It is ſuppoſed that we impute their real effects to the ſciences, when we only deſcribe what ought to be their effects. Theſe appear to me, however, very different. The ſtudy of nature ought, I know, to elevate the ideas of man to his Creator; but it only ſerves to increaſe his own vanity. The philoſopher, who flatters himſelf that he hath penetrated into the ſecrets of the Creator, is preſumptuous enough to compare his pretended wiſdom to the infinite wiſdom of his Maker. He approves, cenſures, corrects, and preſcribes laws to nature and limits to omnipotence: and thus while a philoſopher, engaged with idle ſyſtems, gives himſelf a world of pains, to arrange this machine of the world, the poor huſbandman, who ſees the rain and the ſun contribute, in their turns, to fertilize

tilize his fields, admires, and bleſſes the hand whoſe bounties he receives without troubling himſelf about the manner in which they are beſtowed. He does not ſeek to juſtify his ignorance or his vices by his infidelity. He does not arrogantly cenſure the works of his Creator, nor attack his divine maſter to diſplay his own ſelf-ſufficiency. The impious ſaying of Alphonſo the Tenth could never have fallen from the lips of an ordinary man; no, ſuch a blaſphemy was reſerved for the mouth of a ſcholar. The author proceeds, *The curioſity natural to man, excites in him a deſire to learn.* I anſwer, He ought therefore to lay it under a proper reſtraint, as he ought to do all his natural propenſities.

But *his wants dictate to him the neceſſity of inſtruction.* In many reſpects is is certain the ſciences are uſeful. Yet ſavages are men, and perceive not this neceſſity. *His employments impoſe it on him as a duty.* They more frequently oblige him to avocations from his ſtudies in order to diſcharge his duties*. *The progreſs he makes in ſtudy gives him a taſte for it.* It is for that very reaſon he ſhould diſtruſt it. *His firſt diſcoveries increaſe his curioſity to know ſtill more.* This indeed happens to perſons of genius. *The more he knows, the more he finds there is ſtill to learn.* That is as much as to ſay, that the uſe of all the time he has thrown away, is to induce him to throw away ſtill more. But there are

* It is a bad ſign for community, that ſo much knowledge is requiſite to conduct them. If men were what they ought to be, they would have no occaſion to ſtudy ſo much, to know what they ought to do.

but a small number of those men of genius, who become sensible of their ignorance in proportion to the increase of their knowlege; and it is for these only that science is good and useful. The generality of little minds, when they have learned any thing, are apt to think they know every thing; and there is hardly any folly which this persuasion doth not make them commit. *The more knowledge we acquire, the more easy we find it to act virtuously.* It is plain by this, that the author hath consulted his own heart, rather than made his observations on mankind. He advances still farther; that it is good to know evil, in order to learn to avoid it: affirming that one's virtue cannot be depended on till it hath been put to the proof. These maxims are at least doubtful, and subject to many objections. It is by no means certain that in order to learn to act well, one is obliged to know in how many ways we may act ill. We have an internal guide much more infallible than books, and which never forsakes us in case of need. This is sufficient to direct us always to act aright, if we will but attend to its dictates. Besides, how can we be under the necessity of making a trial of our strength, to assure ourselves of our virtue, when the principal exercise of virtue consists in avoiding every occasion of falling into vice?

A prudent man is continually on his guard, and always distrusts his own strength; he reserves all his fortitude for the time of need, and never unnecessarily exposes himself to danger. The braggard is he who constantly boasts of more than he can perform, and, after having braved and insulted all the world, submits to be beaten

beaten on the firſt rencounter. Let me aſk which of theſe two portraits reſembles moſt a philoſopher at war with his paſſions.

I am reproached with having affected to deduce all my examples of virtue from the ancients. There is great reaſon to think, I ſhould have found more eminent ones, could I have gone ſtill farther into antiquity. I have cited alſo one inſtance of modern people, and it is not my fault that I could find but one. Again I am reproached, in a general reflection, with having drawn odious parallels, in which there is leſs juſtice and zeal than ill-will againſt my compatriots, and diſguſt againſt my contemporaries. And yet perhaps no man living has a greater affection for his country and fellow-countrymen than myſelf. As to the reſt, I have but one word of reply. I have given my reaſons, and thoſe are to be weighed. As to my intentions, thoſe muſt be left to him alone who is the proper judge of them.

I ought not to paſs over in ſilence one conſiderable objection, which hath been already ſtarted by a certain philoſopher. *Is it not*, ſays this writer, *to the climate, temperament, want of opportunity, default of the object, the adminiſtration of government, cuſtoms, laws, and indeed to any thing rather than to the ſciences, that we ought to attribute the difference which is ſometimes remarkable in the morals of different countries and different ages?*

This queſtion is too extenſive in its deſign, and requires a more particular explanation than is proper for this tract. Beſides, it would require me to enter into an examination of

thoſe ſecret, but actual relations, which ſubſiſt between the nature and forms of government and the genius, manners and knowledge of a people: all which would involve me in ſuch delicate inveſtigations as would lead me too far out of my way. Add to this, that it would be very difficult for me to treat the ſubject of government, without laying myſelf too open to my adverſary; and, every thing conſidered, ſuch reſearches were more properly made at Geneva, and in other circumſtances. I proceed now to an accuſation much more ſerious and important than the preceeding. This I ſhall tranſcribe therefore in the author's own words; as it is of conſequence that I ſhould lay it faithfully before the reader.

"The more a Chriſtian examines the authenticity of his title-deeds, the more is he confirmed in the poſſeſſion of his belief: the more he ſtudies revelation, the more ſtrongly is he fortified in the faith. It is in the holy ſcriptures that their excellence and divine original are to be diſcovered; it is in the learned writings of the fathers of the church, that they have been from age to age illuſtrated and explained. It is from books of morality, and the lives of the ſaints, that we trace their examples, and learn to apply their precepts. What! ſhall ignorance be permitted to deprive religion and virtue of ſuch powerful ſupports; and is it to learning that a Genevan doctor openly and loudly imputes a corruption of manners! One would be really more aſtoniſhed to hear ſo ſtrange a paradox, were it not notorious that the ſin-

"gularity

" gularity of an opinion, is an additional mo-
" tive for embracing it with thoſe, who have no
" other guide, than a ſpirit of ſingularity."

But let me aſk this author, how he can preſume to put ſuch an interpretation on the principles I have laid down? How can he accuſe me of cenſuring the ſtudy of religion, when I have condemned an application to the frivolous ſciences, becauſe they diverted our attention from the ſtudy of our duty? And what is the ſtudy of a Chriſtian's duty, if it be not that of his religion?

I ought, without doubt, to have expreſsly condemned thoſe puerile ſubtleties of the ſchools, by which, under the pretext of illuſtrating the principles of religion, its ſpirit hath been extinguiſhed, and ſcientific pride hath been ſubſtituted in the place of Chriſtian humility. I ought to have more ſtrenuouſly blamed thoſe imprudent miniſters of the goſpel, who firſt laid their hands upon the ark, in order to ſupport with their feeble ſcience, an edifice ſupported by the hand of God. I ought to have expreſſed my indignation againſt thoſe frivolous ſcholiaſts, who, by their wretched punctilios, have debaſed the ſublime ſimplicity of the goſpel, and have reduced the doctrine of Jeſus Chriſt into ſyllogiſms. But I am at preſent to defend myſelf, not to attack others.

I ſee that this diſpute is to be decided by appealing to hiſtory and facts. If I could ſhew in few words what our religion and the ſciences had in common at their commencement, perhaps this might ſerve to determine the point in queſtion.

The chosen people of God never cultivated the sciences, nor was that cultivation ever recommended to them: yet surely, if this study had been good for any thing, they had more occasion for it than any other people. On the contrary, their leaders used all the means possible to prevent their intercourse or commixture with the idolatrous and learned nations that surrounded them. A precaution less necessary on one account than on another; as this rude and ignorant people would have been more likely to be seduced by the artifices of the priests of Baal, than by the sophistry of the philosophers.

After their frequent dispersions among the Egyptians and the Greeks, the sciences were with still greater difficulty brought to take any place among the Hebrews. Josephus and Philo, who any where else would have been looked upon as ordinary men, were reckoned among the Jews as prodigies of learning. The Sadducees, remarkable for their irreligion, were the philosophers of Jerusalem; the pharisees, notorious hypocrites, were their orthodox teachers *. The latter, although their science was

* The same hatred and contempt subsisted also between these two parties, as hath been reciprocally kept up between the philosophers and scholars in all ages; that is between those who make their heads a repository for other people's knowledge, and those who pique themselves on having knowledge of their own. Set together by the ears the dancing-master and music-master of the *Gentleman Citizen*, [du Bourgeois Gentilhomme] and you will have the exact picture of the antiquarian and the wit, the chymist and the man of letters, the civilian and the physician,

was confined almoſt ſolely to the ſtudy of the law, proſecuted it with all the pomp and dogmatical ſelf-ſufficiency imaginable. They obſerved all the ceremonies of religion with great exactneſs; but the goſpel informs us of the ſpirit of that obſervance, and the imagined importance of it. Add to this, that they had but very little knowledge, and a great deal of vanity; in which particular they did not differ moſt from the learned profeſſors of modern times.

In the eſtabliſhment of the new law, it was not with the learned that Jeſus Chriſt choſe to entruſt his doctrines and his miniſtry. He followed in his choice that predilection, which he diſplayed on every occaſion for the poor and ſimple. In the inſtructions he gave to his diſciples, alſo, not a ſyllable is mentioned of ſtudy or ſcience, unleſs it be to ſhew the little value he ſet upon them.

After the death of Chriſt, a dozen poor fiſhermen and artificers took upon them to inſtruct and convert the world. Their method was ſimple; they diſplayed no art in their preaching, but an heart penetrated with the ſubject of their diſcourſe. Of all the miracles by which God honoured their faith, the moſt ſtriking was the ſanctity of their lives; their diſciples followed their example, and their ſucceſs was prodigious. The pagan prieſts were alarmed, and

phyſician, the mathematician and the verſifier, the divine and the philoſopher. To form a proper judgment of all theſe people, it is ſufficient to hear what they ſay of themſelves; that is, not what each individual, or the individuals of each profeſſion; but what thoſe of each profeſſion ſay of the other.

complained to their reſpective princes that the ſtate was undone becauſe their offerings and ſacrifices diminiſhed. Perſecutions were ſet on foot, and the perſecutors thereby only accelerated the progreſs of that religion they intended to ſuppreſs. As the martyrs were led to the ſtake, the people flocked to the font; indeed the hiſtory of thoſe primitive times is one continued prodigy.

Yet, notwithſtanding this, the prieſts of the idols, not contented with perſecuting the Chriſtians, began to calumniate them: in which the philoſophers, who did not find their account in a religion which inculcated humility, joined them. Innumerable railleries and reproaches were in conſequence ſhowered down on the new ſect. It became neceſſary to take up the pen in their defence. Juſtin Martyr* accordingly wrote

* Theſe primitive writers, who ſealed with their blood the teſtimony of their pens, would be thought at this time of day, very ſcandalous authors, for they maintain exactly the ſame ſentiments as I do. Juſtin, in his dialogue with Trypho, takes a review of the ſeveral ſects of philoſophy which he had before attacked, and renders them ſo very ridiculous, that you would almoſt think you were reading one of the dialogues of Lucian. In the apology of Tertullian, we ſee alſo, how greatly the primitive Chriſtians were offended at being taken for philoſophers. It would be in fact a very mortifying recapitulation to philoſophy, ſhould we enumerate all the pernicious maxims and impious tenets of their ſeveral ſects. The followers of Epicurus denied a providence: the academics doubted of the exiſtence of a deity, and the ſtoics of the immortality of the ſoul. The

wrote the first apology for the faith. The pagans were now attacked in turn; while to attack was in fact to vanquish them. The success of the first writers encouraged others, who, under the pretence of exposing the turpitude of paganism, entered into subjects of mythology

The sects less famous had no better sentiments. Witness a specimen of those of Theodorus, chief of the two branches of Cyrenaicks, given us by Diogenes Laertius. *Sustulit amicitiam quod ea neque insipientibus neque sapientibus adsit. —— Probabili dicebat prudentem virum non seipsum pro patria periculis exponere, neque enim pro insipientium commodis amittendam esse prudentiam. Furto quoque et adulterio et sacrilegio, cum tempestivum erit daturum operam sapientem. Nihil quippè horum turpe naturâ esse. Sed auferatur de hisce vulgaris opinio, quæ à stultorum imperitorumque plebeculâ conflata est.——Sapientem publicè absque ullo pudore ac suspicione scortis congressurum.*

These opinions, I know, are very particular; but is there one of all the sects, which has not fallen into some gross and dangerous errour? And what shall we say of the distinction of doctrines so readily adopted by all the philosophers; by which they secretly professed sentiments directly opposite to those they taught in public. Pythagoras was the first who made use of his private doctrine; which he taught his disciples after long proof, and with the greatest secrecy. In private he taught them lessons of atheism, at the same time that he publickly offered hecatombs to Jupiter. The philosophers in general approved so highly of this method, that it spread itself rapidly through Greece and from thence to Rome; as is evident from the works of Cicero, who, when among his select friends, turned those immortal gods into ridicule, which he so solemnly called to witness to the truth of his harangues.

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and erudition *. In these, the authors endeavoured to display their learning and ingenuity: thus books multiplied, and a relaxation of morals ensued.

Men were now no longer content with the simplicity of the gospel, and the doctrines of the apostles; every new writer must needs have more wit than his predecessors. Every tenet was rendered more refined; while each of the refiners tenaciously maintained his own opinion, in opposition to all the rest. The ambition of being at the head of a sect universally prevailed; and heresies multiplied abundantly.

Extravagance and violence were soon added to disputation: while the Christians, late so mild and gentle as to be led by the pagans like lambs to the slaughter, became, worse than the

* Clemens Alexandrinus was justly reproached for affecting in his writings a profundity of profane erudition, little becoming a Christian. It seems, however, that he was at that time of day very excusable, for acquiring proper information of the doctrines against which he was to defend himself. But who can behold, without smiling, the ridiculous pains which our modern divines take to explain the reveries of the pagan mythology.

The expediency of an internal doctrine was not carried from Europe to China; but it took rise there together with philosophy: and it is to this circumstance the Chinese are indebted for that multitude of atheists or philosophers which they have among them. The history of this fatal expedient, written by a man of knowledge and sincerity, would give a terrible blow to philosophy, both ancient and modern. But philosophy will triumph over both reason and time; because it has its source in human vanity, the strongest of all sublunar influence.

idolaters,

idolaters, the enraged and furious perſecutors of one another. All gave into the ſame exceſs; the cauſe of truth being maintained with as little moderation as that of errour.

Another evil, ſtill more dangerous, aroſe from the ſame cauſe. This was the introduction of the ancient philoſophy amidſt the doctrines of Chriſtianity. By ſtudying the Greek philoſophers, ſome perſons imagined they diſcovered a relation between their doctrines and thoſe of Chriſtianity: nay it was even ſuppoſed that religion would be rendered more reſpectable, when cloathed with the authority of philoſophy. There was a time when it was held neceſſary to be a Platonic in order to be ranked among orthodox Chriſtians, who were very nigh ſeeing firſt Plato and then Ariſtotle placed on the altar, by the ſide of Jeſus Chriſt.

The church indeed once ſtood up againſt theſe abuſes; which its illuſtrious defenders lament in the moſt pathetic terms; attempting frequently to baniſh altogether that worldly ſcience which corrupted its purity. One of the moſt celebrated popes even carried his zeal ſo far as to maintain that it was a ſhameful thing to ſubject the word of God to the rules of grammar.

In vain, however, were their remonſtrances; borne down by the torrent, they were themſelves obliged to conform to a cuſtom they condemned; moſt of them declaiming in a very learned manner againſt the progreſs of all ſcience and learning.

After long agitations, things took at length a more ſettled turn. Toward the tenth century the meteor of ſcience ceaſed to enlighten the earth;

earth: the clergy remained plunged in a ſtate of ignorance, which I will by no means juſtify, becauſe it related no leſs to thoſe things which they ought to have known, than to ſuch as were uſeleſs. By this means, nevertheleſs, the Church obtained a little more repoſe than it had before experienced.

On the revival of letters, its diviſions aroſe again, with more violence than ever. It was the learned who began the quarrel, the learned kept it up, and thoſe who poſſeſſed the greateſt abilities, poſſeſſed alſo the greateſt ſhare of obſtinacy. It was in vain that conferences were appointed, to adjuſt the differences between the learned of each party; while the partizans had no mind for a reconciliation, nor perhaps any regard for the truth. Each wanted only to diſplay his talents at the expence of his adverſary. All wanted to gain the victory, but none deſired inſtruction: the ſtrongeſt impoſed ſilence on the weaker, while the diſpute conſtantly ended in abuſe and perſecution. God only knows when theſe evils will have an end.

The arts and ſciences are at preſent in a flouriſhing condition; literature is ſtill ſucceſsfully cultivated: but of what advantage are they to religion? Let us aſk this queſtion of thoſe numerous philoſophers, who pique themſelves on ſuch cultivation. Our libraries are full of books of divinity, and we are every where overrun by caſuiſts. Formerly we had ſaints, but no caſuiſts. Science extends itſelf, and religion decays. All the world are for teaching how to act well, but nobody is willing to learn. We are in fact all become ſcholars, and have ceaſed to be Chriſtians.

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No, it was not by means of ſo much artifice and ſtudy that the Goſpel ſpread itſelf over the univerſe, and that its captivating beauty penetrated the hearts of mankind. This divine book, the only one neceſſary for Chriſtians, and the moſt uſeful even to thoſe who are not, need only to be read and reflected on, to inſpire the ſoul with the love of its author, and a deſire to obey his precepts. Never did virtue ſpeak in ſo pleaſing a ſtile; never was profound wiſdom expreſſed with ſo much energy and ſimplicity. It is impoſſible to give over reading it, without perceiving ourſelves the better for it. O ye miniſters of that Goſpel which it contains, give yourſelves leſs trouble to inſtruct me in ſo many uſeleſs things. Throw aſide all thoſe learned volumes which can neither convince nor affect me. Proſtrate yourſelves at the feet of that God of Mercy, whom you undertake to make me know and love; aſk of him for yourſelves that profound humility which you ought to preach to me. Diſplay not to me that variety of ſcience, that indecent pomp of learning which diſhonours you, and diſguſts me. Be you affected yourſelves, if you would have me ſo; and, above all, give me a proof, in your conduct, of your practiſing that law, in which you pretend to inſtruct me. You have no need of any other learning either for yourſelves, or to inſtruct us. Do this, and your miniſtry is accompliſhed; and that without even the mention of the belles-lettres or of philoſophy. It is thus you ought to practiſe, and to preach the Goſpel, and it was thus its firſt defenders cauſed it to triumph over all nations,

tions, not *Ariſtotelico more*, as the fathers ſaid, but *piſcatorio more*.

I perceive that I am growing prolix; but I thought it indiſpenſibly neceſſary for me to dwell ſomewhat long upon a point of ſo much importance. Beſides the impatient reader ſhould conſider that it is very eaſy to play the critic; as a writer may be attacked on account of a ſingle word; from which attack it may require whole pages to defend him.

But to proceed to the ſecond part of the anſwer, in replying to which, I ſhall endeavour to be more conciſe, although I do not find that I ſhall have fewer obſervations to make.

I am told that *It is not ſcience, but wealth, that hath in all ages given birth to effeminacy and luxury.* I did not ſay that the ſciences gave birth to luxury, but that they had their birth together, and that they were always inſeparable. I ſettle their genealogy thus: the firſt ſource of evil is inequality: from inequality flow riches; for the terms rich and poor are merely relative, and wherever men are all equal, there are none either rich or poor.

From riches are derived luxury and idleneſs: from luxury ariſe the fine arts, and from idleneſs the ſciences. But *riches never were in any age the portion of the learned.* The evil is for this reaſon ſo much the worſe: for, as it is, the rich and the learned ſerve mutually to corrupt each other. If the rich were more learned, or the learned more rich; the one would be leſs ſervile in their flattery, and the other love leſs to be flattered; ſo that both would be the better for it. This is evident to be ſeen in thoſe few,

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who have the happineſs to be at once both rich and learned. To go on with my antagoniſt. *For one Plato in opulence, for one Ariſtippus a favorite at court, how many philoſophers have there been reduced to a thread-bare cloke and wallet, or left without any other covering than their own virtue in penury and ſolitude!* I do not pretend to deny that there have been a great number of philoſophers exceedingly poor, and am exceedingly ſorry that they were ſo: nor do I doubt that their philoſophy was for the moſt part owing merely to their poverty: but when I am to ſuppoſe them virtuous, it muſt be from their morals, which as the people were not witneſs of, could they learn by them to improve their own?

The learned have neither leiſure nor inclination to amaſs great wealth. I agree that they have not leiſure; *they love ſtudy.* He who does not take delight in his calling, muſt needs be either very fooliſh or very wretched. *They live in a ſtate of mediocrity.* One muſt be greatly diſpoſed in their favour to make this a merit.

A life of induſtry and temperance, paſſed in the ſilence of ſolitude, and employed in reading and labour, is not moſt aſſuredly a life of luxury and vice. Not indeed in the eyes of the world; this depends on the heart. A man may poſſibly be compelled to live ſuch a life, and yet have a very corrupt heart. Beſides what ſignifies his being modeſt and virtuous himſelf, if the ſubjects of his employment ſerve to diffuſe idleneſs, and to corrupt his fellow-citizens. *The conveniences of life, notwithſtanding they are often the product of the arts, are not therefore in a greater degree the portion of the artiſts.* The artiſts never

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appeared to me so very ready to refuse them; especially those who, being employed in arts altogether useless, and of course very lucrative, are in a situation to procure what they may desire; *they labour only for the rich.* As things go on at present, I should not be astonished to see, some time or other, the rich working for them; *and it is the wealthy who are idle, that profit and abuse their industry.* Again I say, I do not see that our artists are such simple, modest people as they are here described. Luxury cannot generally prevail among any one rank of citizens, without presently affecting in some degree every other. Luxury is a general corruptor, as well of the wealthy who enjoy it, as of the poor who covet it. I do not pretend that it is any evil in itself to wear laced ruffles, an embroidered coat, or carry about one an enamelled snuff-box: but it is a very great one to look upon these baubles as matters of importance; to esteem those happy who possess them, and to devote that time and pains to acquire the like, which ought to be employed on more noble objects. I have no need to be told the profession of a man thus employed, in order to form a proper judgment of him. I pass over that fine description my antagonist hath given us of the learned, in doing which, I think he is not a little indebted to my complaisance. He is less indulgent to me; for he not only allows me nothing that he can possibly refuse me; but rather than condemn the evil which I think of our vain and false politeness, he rather chuses to excuse the hypocrisy of it. He asks me, if I would have vice shew itself openly? Assuredly I would. Our confidence and esteem for the vir-

virtuous, would then be revived; we ſhould learn to diſtruſt the vicious, and ſociety would be much more ſecure.

Doubtleſs, I had rather that my enemy ſhould attack me openly and by force, than that he ſhould come treacherouſly to ſtab me in the back. How! you will ſay, ſhall we add ſcandal to vice? I wiſh we did not add deceit. The maxims lately inculcated about avoiding ſcandal, are certainly very convenient for the vicious; and if we were to follow them very rigorouſly, we might ſuffer them to rob and murder with impunity; for it cannot be doubted that a thief at the gallows is a very ſcandalous ſight. *But hypocriſy*, it is ſaid, *is the homage which vice pays to virtue.* Yes, juſt as the aſſaſſins of Cæſar, who knelt down that they might ſtab him with greater certainty. It is in vain that the above ingenious ſaying, is enforced by the celebrated name of its author, it is not on that account the more juſt. Will it be ſaid of a thief, who ſhould put on the livery of a gentleman, in order to rob his houſe more conveniently, that he rendered homage to the maſter of it? No, to clothe villainy with the dangerous cloak of hypocriſy, is doing no honour to virtue: it is to inſult her, in profaning her inſignia: it is to add deceit and cowardice to the other vices; and to preclude for ever a return to probity. There are ſome elevated characters, that mix ſomething ſo bold and generous, even with their crimes, as to betray a ſpark of that celeſtial fire, which animates great minds. But the mean and ſervile ſoul of an hypocrite is like a dead carcaſs, in which there is neither heat, fire, nor ſpark of life remaining.

ing. I appeal to experience, whether there have not been inſtances of many brave and wicked men, who, recovering themſelves, have been reclaimed to virtue, and cloſed their lives in a manner truly exemplary. But no body ever yet knew an hypocrite become a man of probity. One might not have unreaſonably undertaken the converſion of a Cartouche; but no man in his ſenſes would have attempted that of Cromwell.

I have imputed to the reſtoration of letters and the arts, that elegance and politeneſs which prevail in our manners. This the author of the anſwer diſputes with me, which ſurprizes me much: for as he ſets ſuch great ſtore both by politeneſs and ſcience, I do not perceive what advantage he will reap, by depriving one of the honour of producing the other. But let us examine his argument; which may be reduced to this.

It is not obſervable that the learned are more polite than other men: on the contrary, they are often much leſs ſo; therefore our politeneſs is not the effect of the ſciences.

In reply to this, I ſhall remark in the firſt place, that it is not ſo much the ſpeculative ſciences as literature, the fine arts, and productions of taſte, that are here intended; and I will venture to ſay that our *beaux eſprits* with as little ſcience as you pleaſe, are ſo polite, ſo brilliant, ſo much the fine gentlemen, that they would not eaſily know themſelves under that pedantic and unpoliſhed air, which the author of the anſwer hath imputed to them. But not to inſiſt on this point: we will agree, for argument's ſake, that the ſcholars, the poets and the

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wits are all equally ridiculous; that the gentlemen of the Academy of Belles-Lettres, the gentlemen of the Academy of Sciences, and the gentlemen of the Academie Francoiſe, are rude, unpoliſhed clowns; that they know neither the cuſtoms and manners of the world, but are excluded by their profeſſion from all good company: the anſwerer will gain little by this conceſſion, as he would not be any more authorized to deny that the politeneſs and urbanity which prevail among us, are the effect of a good taſte, which firſt took place among the ancients, and hath been diffuſed all over Europe, by the publication of poliſhed and agreeable writings *. As the beſt dancing-maſters, have not always the politeſt method of perſonal addreſs; ſo a man may be very capable of giv-

* In treating of ſubjects ſo very general as the morals and manners of a people, great care ſhould be taken not to confine our views to particular examples: as this is the way never to come at the true ſource of things. To know whether I am in the right, to impute politeneſs to the cultivation of letters, it muſt not be inquired whether this or that individual among the learned be polite or not; but an examination ſhould be made into the relations and connections of literature and politeneſs; and then enquiry ſhould be made, among what people theſe things have been found united or ſeparated. The ſame may be ſaid of luxury, liberty, and of all other things that affect the morals of a nation, and about which I hear held every day a number of pitiful arguments. To examine the effects of theſe things in miniature, and on individuals, is not to philoſophize, but to throw away one's time and reflections: for we may be well acquainted with Jack and Peter, and know very little of mankind in general.

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ing leſſons of politeneſs, without having the talent or inclination of putting them in practice. Thoſe heavy commentators, who, we are told, underſtood every thing of the writings of the ancients, except their peculiar grace and beauty, have not failed, however, by their uſeful though ſlighted performances, to teach us to perceive and taſte thoſe beauties they could not taſte themſelves. It is the ſame thing with that agreeableneſs of converſation and elegance of manners, which have been ſubſtituted inſtead of their primitive ſimplicity and purity; and which have taken place among all nations where literature hath been held in eſteem. At Athens, at Rome, in China, every where, have elegance of ſtile and complacency of manners accompanied, not the ſcholar and the artiſt, but the ſciences and the fine arts.

The author attacks next the commendations I have beſtowed on a ſtate of ignorance; and after accuſing me of ſpeaking more like an orator than a philoſopher, he proceeds to deſcribe it himſelf, which he does moſt aſſuredly in very fine colours. I do not deny that he is in the right; and yet I cannot conceive that I am in the wrong. It requires only for us to make a very juſt and true diſtinction to be reconciled.

There are two kinds of ignorance: the one brutal and ferocious *, which ariſes from a badneſs

* I ſhould be much ſurprized if any of my critics ſhould object to the eulogium I have made on ſeveral ignorant and virtuous people, by oppoſing to it a liſt of all thoſe bands of robbers that have occaſionally infeſted the earth; and who in general were

neſs of heart, and a defect in underſtanding; a criminal ignorance, which extends even to the duties of humanity, which increaſes the number of vices, degrades our reaſon, debaſes the ſoul, and levels mankind with the brutes: it is this kind of ignorance which my antagoniſt has attacked, and of which, it muſt be confeſſed, he hath drawn a very odious and ſtriking deſcription. The other kind of ignorance is by no means irrational, but conſiſts in the limitation of our curioſity to the extent of our faculties; a modeſt ignorance, which ariſes from an ardent love for virtue, and renders us indifferent to all thoſe things, which are not worthy to engage the heart, or do not contribute to make us better. This delightful and valuable kind of ignorance, is a treaſure to an innocent mind, that is contented with itſelf, and places all its happineſs in the conſciouſneſs of its own integrity; never ſeeking that vain and fallacious honour which reſults from the opinion which others entertain of our talents or abilities. Such is the ignorance I commended, and which, I pray heaven, may be my puniſhment for the ſcandal I have brought upon the learned, by my declared contempt for human ſciences.

were not compoſed of the moſt learned men in the world. I adviſe them beforehand not to give themſelves ſuch needleſs trouble, unleſs, indeed, they think it neceſſary to diſplay their erudition. Had I ſaid that in order to be virtuous, it was ſufficient to be ignorant; it would have coſt little pains to anſwer me; and, for the ſame reaſon, I think myſelf excuſed from anſwering thoſe who throw away their time to maintain the contrary.

Let us compare, says my answerer, *with the times of ignorance and barbarism, those happy ages in which the sciences have universally diffused a spirit of order and justice among men.* Those happy ages, I fear, will be very difficult to be found; but thanks to the sciences, we may very easily find those in which *justice and order* are nothing more than unmeaning terms, made use of to amuse the people; in which the appearance of those things is carefully preserved, only that their reality may be destroyed with impunity. *We see in our own times that wars are less frequent, but more just.* I do not well comprehend that war can at any time be more just on the side of one of the belligerant parties than it must be unjust on that of the other? *We are witnesses of actions less astonishing but more heroical.* There is nobody possibly will dispute my adversary's right to judge of heroism; but is he certain that things which may not astonish him, may not be astonishing to us? *Our victories are less bloody but more glorious; our conquests less rapid but more certain; our warriors less violent, but more formidable; capable of vanquishing with moderation, and of treating the vanquished with humanity: men whose honour is their guide, and whose glory is their reward.*

I do not deny that we have great men among us; it would be easy to furnish proofs of there being such: but this does not prevent the people in general from being corrupt. Besides, assertions of this kind are so vague and undeterminate, that they may be made concerning all ages; and it is impossible to reply to them without turning over whole libraries, and writ-

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ing volumes in folio to eſtabliſh the proofs pro & contra.

When Socrates declaimed againſt the ſciences, it appears to me that he could not have in view either the arrogance of the ſtoicks, the effeminacy of the Epicureans, nor the abſurd jargon of the Pyrrhoniſts, becauſe none of thoſe people at that time exiſted. But this ſlight anachroniſm does not ill become my adverſary: he hath employed his life better than in ſtudying chronology, and is no more obliged to have his Diogenes Laertius by heart, than I to have ſeen more particularly what paſſed in the ancient combats.

I admit that Socrates intended only to expoſe the vices of the philoſophers of his time: but I know not what concluſion to draw from this, unleſs it be that the philoſophers of his time abounded in vices. This, it will be ſaid, aroſe from the abuſe of philoſophy; but I do not know that I have ſaid any thing to the contrary. What then! is every thing to be ſuppreſſed that is ſubject to be abuſed! Undoubtedly, anſwer I, without heſitation; every thing that is uſeleſs, and of which the abuſe does more hurt than the uſe does good.

Let us ſtop a moment at this laſt concluſion, leſt any ſhould haſtily infer that we ought at preſent to burn all our libraries, and deſtroy our academies and univerſities. In doing this, Europe would only be plunged again into a ſtate of barbariſm, without any amendment of its morals *. It is with ſorrow I am going to

* *Our vices would remain*, ſays the philoſopher I have already cited, *and we ſhould be ignorant into the bargain.*

declare a great and fatal truth. There is but one ſtep from knowledge to ignorance, and various nations have taken it alternately from one to the other; but it hath never been known that a people once corrupted ever were reſtored to virtue. It were to no purpoſe to remove the aliments of vanity, idleneſs and luxury; in vain ſhould we reduce mankind to their primitive equality, the preſerver of innocence and ſource of every virtue. When their hearts are once vitiated, they will always remain ſo: nor is there any remedy, unleſs it be ſome great revolution almoſt as much to be dreaded as the evil it might cure, an event which it is blameable to hope for, and impoſſible to foreſee.

Let us leave the arts and ſciences, therefore, to ſoften, as much as may be, the ferocity of men whom they have corrupted; let us make a prudent uſe of them, by way of diverting and amuſing the paſſions. Let us give ſome ſubſiſtence to theſe tygers that they devour not our offspring. The learning of the wicked is ſtill leſs to be feared than their brutal ſtupidity; it renders them at leaſt more circumſpect about what evil they commit, from a foreſight of that which may thence happen to themſelves.

I have praiſed the academies with their illuſtrious founders, and am ready to repeat their praiſes. When the evil is incurable, a phyſician ſhould apply palliatives, and adapt his remedies leſs to the condition than to the conſtitution of his patients.

It is the province of prudent legiſlators to imitate this conduct; and as they cannot appropriate to a diſordered people the moſt excellent ſyſtem of policy, let them, like Solon, adopt the beſt they are able to bear.

Europe

Europe at preſent boaſts a great prince, and what is much more, a virtuous citizen, who hath formed ſeveral inſtitutions in favour of literature in the country, he hath adopted and rendered happy by his government. In this, he hath done an action worthy of his wiſdom and virtue. In regard to political eſtabliſhments, every thing depends on time and place. Sovereign princes ſhould at all times cultivate the arts and ſciences, for their own intereſt. I have given a reaſon for this. In the preſent ſtate of things, they ſhould encourage them, alſo, for the intereſt of their ſubjects. If there were any ſovereigns in Europe, of ſo confined a capacity, as to think and act otherwiſe, their ſubjects would become poor and ignorant, without being leſs vicious than other nations. My adverſary has neglected to take advantage of an example ſo ſtriking, and in appearance ſo favourable to his cauſe. He is, however, the only perſon in the world, perhaps, that is ignorant or forgetful of it. Let him permit me then to put him in mind of it; let him not refuſe to grant things the praiſes that are due to them; let him admire them as well as we, without being rendered thereby more poſitive againſt the truths he hath attacked.

A

LETTER

From Mr. ROUSSEAU to Mr. GRIMM.

Occaſioned by the Refutation of his Diſcourſe by Mr. GAUTIER, Profeſſor of the Mathematicks and of Hiſtory, and Member of the Academy of Belles-Lettres at Nancy.

I Return you, Sir, the Mercury for October, which you was ſo kind as to lend me. I have peruſed, with a good deal of pleaſure, the refutation which Mr. Gautier has taken the trouble to write againſt me. But I am not of your opinion that I am under any kind of neceſſity to reply to it. And theſe are my objections.

1. I cannot perſuade myſelf that, in order to be in the right, it is indiſpenſably neceſſary to have always the laſt word.

2. The more I peruſe the refutation, the more I am convinced that I ought to give Mr. Gautier no other reply than the diſſertation he has anſwered. Read over what is advanced in both, on the ſubject of luxury, war, academies and education; read the proſopopœia of Louis le Grand, and that of Fabricius; in ſhort,

ſhort, compare Mr. Gautier's concluſion with mine, and you will comprehend what I ſay.

3. My manner of thinking is ſo entirely different from that of Mr. Gautier, that, if I were to take notice of all the paſſages where we diſagree, I ſhould be obliged to contradict him, even with regard to things that I ſhould have advanced as well as he; and this will give me ſuch an air of inconſiſtency that I ſhould rather if poſſible avoid it. Thus, for inſtance, in ſpeaking of politeneſs, he very explicitly declares that, in order to become a man of probity, it is proper to begin by being firſt an hypocrite, and that falſehood is the means of arriving at virtue. He ſays farther, that the vices, ſet off by politeneſs, are not contagious, as they would be if they preſented themſelves in the garb of ruſticity: that the art of penetrating the ſentiments of mankind, hath made as great a progreſs as that of diſguiſing them: that men are convinced they muſt place no confidence in thoſe to whom they do not give pleaſure or are not of uſe; that every one knows what value to ſet upon the ſpecious offers of politeneſs; all which is doubtleſs as much as to ſay, that, when two men are complimenting each other, and the one ſays from the bottom of his heart, *I treat you like an aſs, and only laugh at you*; the other anſwers from the bottom of his, *I know that you are an impudent liar, but I will be even with you if I can.* Had I been inclined to employ the moſt bitter irony, I ſhould have ſaid very nearly as much.

4. It is evident from every page of the refutation, that the author does not, or will not, underſtand the performance he hath under-

taken to refute. A great conveniency indeed results to him from this; which is that by always replying to his own sentiment and never to mine, he has the finest opportunity in the world, of saying just what he pleases. On the other hand, as my reply is hence more difficult, it is become also less necessary; for who ever heard of a painter, that when he exhibited a performance in public, was obliged to examine the eyes of the spectators, and to furnish the dim-sighted with spectacles? Add to this, it is not very certain that I myself should be understood in my reply. As for example. Should I say to Mr. Gautier, "I know that our soldiers are not Reaumurs nor Fontenelles; and that it is so much the worse for them, for us, and particularly for the enemy. I know that they know nothing; that they are gross and brutal; and yet I have said, and I say again that they are enervated by the sciences which they despise, and by the polite arts of which they are ignorant. It is one of the greatest inconveniences attending the cultivation of letters, that in return for the few men they enlighten, they corrupt a whole nation." Now, you see plainly, Sir, that all this would only be another inexplicable paradox to Mr. Gautier; who asks me what have troops to do with academies? Whether soldiers have more bravery for being badly clothed and poorly fed? What I mean by advancing, that in doing honour to the talents of men we neglect their virtues? with other questions of the like nature, that shew it to be impossible to give an intelligible and satisfactory reply to the person who asks them. And I believe you will agree with

with me that it is not worth while to explain myself a second time, to be understood no better than I was the first.

5. If I had a mind to answer the first part of the refutation; it would be the way never to have done. Mr. Gautier has thought proper to prescribe to me the authors I am to quote, and those whose authority I am to reject. His choice is natural enough; as he objects to all those who depose in my favour, and is desirous that I should rest my cause on those which, he thinks, make against it. It would be to no purpose I should tell him that one good evidence in my favour is decisive, while an hundred evidences are of no avail against me so long as they are parties in the cause. In vain should I desire him to distinguish between the examples he cites; in vain represent to him that to be uncivilized, and to be criminal, are very distinct and different; or that a people really corrupted are not so much those who have bad laws, as those who despise all law. His answer I foresee is ready and easy. "What credit, will he say, can be given to a pack of scandalous writers, who have ventured to praise the morals of Barbarians that could neither write nor read? How can we ever imagine a people could be modest who used to go naked? or be virtuous and eat raw flesh?"

Thus we should go to disputing, and Herodotus, Strabo, and Pomponius-Mela would be drawn up against Xenophon, Justin, Quintus Curtius, and Tacitus. Thus engaged in researches of criticism, antiquity and erudition, pamphlets would swell into volumes; books would multiply, and the question would be

forgotten. Such is the fate of literary disputes, which always end with our not knowing where we are, nor where we set out from.

If I were inclined indeed to answer the second part, it would be soon done; but nobody would be at all instructed by it. Mr. Gautier contents himself, with refuting me by saying *yes*, wherever I have said *no*, and by saying *no*, wherever I have said *yes*. I have nothing more to do, therefore, than to repeat, yes and no, in the proper places, and he is fully answered. Thus in following Mr. Gautier's method, I cannot answer both parts of his refutation, without saying too much or too little. I am therefore resolved to do neither the one nor the other.

6. I might pursue another method, and examine separately the arguments, and the stile of Mr. Gautier's refutation. If I examine his arguments, it is easy for me to shew that they are all fallacious; that the author does not enter into the state of the question, and that he does not understand me.

For example, Mr. Gautier takes the pains to inform me, that there are vicious people in the world, who are not learned; and, to be sure, I must have been in some doubt whether the Calmucks, the Bedouins and the Hottentots were not prodigies of virtue and erudition. Had this writer taken the pains to shew me a learned people who were not vicious, he would have surprized me much more. He has represented me always as arguing to prove that science is the only source of corruption among mankind. If he really thought so, I wonder at his complacency in answering me at all.

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He says that a commerce with the world, is sufficient to enable any one to acquire that politeness, which qualifies the fine gentleman, from whence he concludes, that it is without grounds the honour of it is imputed to the sciences. But, to what, then, must we attribute this honour? Ever since men have lived together in a state of society, some people have been polite, and others not so. This author has forgotten to account for that difference.

Mr. Gautier every where expresses his admiration of the purity of modern manners. The good opinion he entertains of them, may possibly do some honour to his own; but it does not shew much knowledge and experience of the world.

One would imagine, by his manner of writing, that he had studied mankind, as the peripateticks did natural philosophy, without ever stirring out of their closets. For my part, I locked up my books, and having heard men talk, examined their actions. It is not at all surprizing that, having taken such different methods of acquiring our knowledge, we should differ so much in opinion. I am sensible that the language of the present age is unexceptionable, and this is what strikes Mr. Gautier. But at the same time, I am sensible that its manners are extremely corrupt; and this is what disgusts me. For, are we to think that we are become men of probity, because by means of giving decent names to our vices, we have learned no longer to blush at them.

He says farther, that, even could it be proved by facts, that a corruption of morals hath always prevailed with the sciences, it will not

thence follow that the fate of virtue depends on their progreſs. But having employed the firſt part of my diſſertation to ſhew that theſe things always accompanied each other, I endeavoured in the ſecond to ſhew that one actually did depend on the other. To which part of my piece would Mr. Gautier make anſwer by the above reflection?

This gentleman ſeems to take particular offence at what I have ſaid reſpecting the mode of education at our univerſities. He informs me that our young people are there taught a number of fine things, which may poſſibly ſerve for their amuſement when they are grown up; but of which I muſt confeſs I do not ſee the utility, nor any connection they have with their duty as citizens: which I think ought firſt to be taught them. "We readily aſk, "Doth he underſtand Latin and Greek? doth "he write in verſe or proſe? But, Is he be-"come better or more prudent? This, though "the principal thing to be thought on, is the "laſt to be enquired after. Should one ſay of "a perſon paſſing along the ſtreet, *There goes* "*a learned man*, and of another, *There goes a* "*good man*, the looks and reſpect of the peo-"ple would give ſuch preference to the former, "that a third perſon would have great reaſon "to call them a *parcel of blockheads*."

I have ſaid that nature ſought to preſerve us from ſcience, as a mother ſnatches a dangerous weapon out of the hands of her children, and that the trouble we find in acquiring learning, is not the ſmalleſt of her favours. Mr. Gautier had rather I ſhould have ſaid thus. "Know "ye people, that nature never intended you

"ſhould

" ſhould be nouriſhed by the fruits of the " earth, the pains and trouble, annexed to the " culture of it, being a ſufficient warning to " leave it uncultivated." He does not conſider that, with a very ſmall degree of labour, men are certain to provide themſelves food, but that after a great deal of ſtudy, it is very doubtful whether a man may acquire underſtanding. He does not reflect alſo that this is a farther obſervation in my favour: for why hath nature impoſed on us uſeful and neceſſary labours, unleſs to divert our attention from occupations that are frivolous and uſeleſs? But it appears by the contempt which this writer affects for agriculture, that, if it depended on him, our huſbandmen would ſoon deſert our fields, in order to fill the ſchools; an employment, according to Mr. Gautier, and I believe many other profeſſors, more important to the ſtate.

In reaſoning upon a paſſage in Plato, I preſumed that perhaps the ancient Egyptians did not hold the ſciences in ſuch high eſteem as hath been imagined. The author of the refutation aſks me, how I reconcile that opinion with the inſcription which Oſymandias had placed in his library. This difficulty had been ſtarted with propriety enough in the life-time of that prince; but now he is dead, I aſk, in my turn, where is the neceſſity of our reconciling the opinion of king Oſymandias with that of the Egyptian philoſophers? And whether he had counted, and particularly if he had eſtimated the votes, of ſuch as might anſwer that the word *poiſons* was not ſubſtituted in the place of *remedies*. But to paſs over that faſtidious inſcription. Theſe remedies I confeſs

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are excellent, and I have frequently repeated that conceſſion. But is this a reaſon why they ſhould be adminiſtered inconſiderately, and without regard to the conſtitutions of the ſick? An aliment may be very good in itſelf, which in a weak ſtomach may only breed ill humours and indigeſtions. What ſhould we ſay of a phyſician, who after having made a juſt elogium on certain nutritive viands, ſhould conclude that all the ſick ought indiſcriminately to feed upon them!

I have ſhewn that the ſciences and the arts enervate our courage. Mr. Gautier calls this a very ſingular method of reaſoning, and ſees no connection between courage and virtue. This is not ſo very difficult, however, in my opinion, to be comprehended. The man who is once accuſtomed to prefer life to his duty, will not be long before he prefers alſo thoſe things, which render life eaſy and agreeable.

I have ſaid that ſcience is proper enough for great geniuſes, but that it is hurtful to the people in general. Mr. Gautier ſays that Socrates and Cato, both of whom cenſured the ſciences, were nevertheleſs very learned men; and this he calls refuting my aſſertion.

I ſaid that Socrates was the moſt learned of all the Athenians, and that for this reaſon I appealed to his authority: but all this does not hinder Mr. Gautier from thinking it neceſſary to inform me that Socrates was learned.

He blames me for having advanced that Cato deſpiſed the Greek philoſophers; and grounds his cenſure on the relation that Carneades took a delight in eſtabliſhing and controverting the ſame propoſitions; a circumſtance that very un-

juſtly prejudiced Cato againſt the Grecian literature. Mr. Gautier, however, ought to inform us what was the country and profeſſion of this Carneades. To be ſure, he was the only philoſopher, who hath piqued himſelf on his being able to maintain the pro & contra of an argument: otherwiſe what the refuter advances on this head, is nothing at all to the purpoſe. I appeal, on this ſubject, to Mr. Gautier's erudition.

If the refutation doth not abound with ſolid reaſoning, it is made up for by very curious declamations. Indeed the author ſubſtitutes throughout the artificial ornaments of ſtile inſtead of that ſolidity of proof, which he promiſed at firſt ſetting out: and thus, while he is laviſhing his oratory on a refutation, he reproaches me for having employed it in an academical diſcourſe.

To what purpoſe then, ſays Mr. Gautier, *are all the eloquent declamations of Mr. Rouſſeau?* To aboliſh, if poſſible, the vain declamations of the colleges. *Who is there, that doth not feel ſome indignation at being told that we have the appearances of all the virtues without poſſeſſing one?* I confeſs there is a little flattery in ſaying that we have even all the appearances of virtue; but M. Gautier ought, ſooner than any body, to excuſe this. *And why have we no longer any virtue? Becauſe truly we cultivate the arts and ſciences.* Even ſo; for that very reaſon preciſely. *If we were ſtill uncivilized, rude, ignorant, Goths, Huns and Vandals, we ſhould be worthy of Mr. Rouſſeau's commendation.* Why not? Is there any of thoſe appellations incompatible with virtue? *Will he never ceaſe caſting*

invectives

invectives on mankind? Will mankind never ceaſe to be wicked? *Does he think he will ever make them virtuous, by telling them they are deſtitute of virtue?* Can he think they will ever be made better by telling them they are already good enough? *Under the pretence of correcting their morals, ought he to ſubvert the ſupport of them?* Under the pretence of enlightening the minds of men, ought we to corrupt their hearts? *O, ye pleaſing bonds of ſociety, the delight of true philoſophers! Ye amiable virtues! it is by your own native charms that you captivate our hearts: you owe not your empire either to ſtoical affectation, to the clamours of barbariſm, or to the councils of haughty ruſticity.*

I muſt here make one pleaſant remark; and this is, that of all the ſects of ancient philoſophers which I have attacked, as uſeleſs to virtue, the ſtoics are thoſe only which Mr. Gautier has given up to me; and theſe he ſeems to rank on my ſide of the queſtion. He is in the right, I ſhall not be the more proud, for ſuch auxiliaries.

But let us ſee if I cannot render exactly the ſenſe of this exclamation in other words. "Ye "amiable virtues! it is by your own native "charms that you captivate our hearts. You "do not ſtand in need of all the vaſt apparatus "of ignorance and ruſticity. You know how "to penetrate the heart by more ſimple and na- "tural methods. It is ſufficient only to know "rhetorick, logick, phyſicks, metaphyſicks, "and the mathematicks, to acquire the right "of poſſeſſing you."

Another example of the ſtile of Mr. Gautier: *You know that the ſciences, on which our young philo-*

philoſophers are employed at the univerſity, are logick, the metaphyſicks, phyſicks and the elementary parts of mathematicks. If I once did know it, I have forgot it, as we all do, when we come to years of diſcretion. *Theſe are according to you barren ſpeculations.* They are barren ſpeculations in the common opinion of mankind; in mine they are very fertile, and pregnant with many evils. *The univerſities are much obliged to you for informing them that the truth of the ſciences is retired to the bottom of a well.* I don't know that I have informed any body of ſuch a thing. That ſaying is not of my invention, but is as old as philoſophy itſelf. As for the reſt, I know that the univerſities owe me no obligation; and I am not to learn that, when I took up my pen, it was impoſſible for me to make my court to men, and at the ſame time do homage to truth. *The great philoſophers, who poſſeſs the ſciences to an eminent degree, are doubtleſs ſurprized to learn that they know nothing.* I do believe in fact that theſe great philoſophers, who poſſeſs all theſe great ſciences to ſuch an eminent degree, will be very much ſurprized to learn that they know nothing. But I ſhould be much more ſurprized myſelf, if theſe learned men, who know ſo many things, ſhould ever know this.

I remark that Mr. Gautier, who treats me throughout with the utmoſt politeneſs, lets ſlip no occaſion, however, to create me enemies; he extends his regard for me this way even from the heads of colleges to thoſe of kingdoms. He does well to juſtify the practices of the world; to which he is evidently no ſtranger.

Indeed Mr. Gautier's manner of writing and reaſoning in general, ſo ill agrees with a man

of

of his apparent ingenuity, that it has ſuggeſted a conjecture; which poſſibly to you may ſeem a bold one, but to me appears reaſonable. He accuſes me, aſſuredly without believing it, that I am not myſelf perſuaded of the truth of the ſentiments I have advanced. Now, I ſuſpect, and that with much more reaſon, that he is after all really of my opinion. His profeſſion and ſituation in life, laid him under a kind of neceſſity of taking part againſt me. The modern decorum of keeping up appearances has certainly its uſe in many reſpects. Thus he will have refuted me out of decorum, but have taken every precaution, and employed all poſſible art to do it in ſuch a manner as not to convince the reader.

It ſeems to be with this view that he ſets out, with declaring that the cauſe he defends, is intereſting to the happineſs of the aſſembly he is addreſſing, and to the glory of that great prince under whoſe government they are ſo fortunate as to live. All which is juſt as much as if he had ſaid, You cannot, gentlemen, without being guilty of ingratitude toward your reſpectable protector, refuſe to acknowledge I am in the right. It is, beſides, your own cauſe that I am pleading before you; ſo that in whatever light you regard my arguments, I have a right to expect, you will not be very ſcrupulous, in admitting their ſolidity. Now I ſay, that every man, who delivers himſelf in this manner, ſeems more intent to cloſe the lips of the judges than deſirous of convincing them. If you give the refutation an attentive peruſal, you will hardly find a line, which does not ſeem to indicate my anſwer. A ſingle example

will

will suffice to make me understood. *The victories which the Athenians gained over the Persians, and even over the Lacedemonians themselves, shew that the arts may accompany military virtue.* I ask whether this reflection is not artfully made, to recall to mind what I have said of the defeat of Xerxes, and to make me refer to the close of the Peloponnesian war. *Their government, become venal under Pericles, assumed a new form; the love of pleasure extinguished their bravery; their most honourable employments became cheap; impunity multiplied the number of bad citizens: the treasures, set apart for the support of war, were converted to nourish effeminacy and idleness: but what have all these causes of corruption to do with the sciences?* Mr. Gautier hath here only recapitulated the heads of a second part of my dissertation, wherein I have demonstrated the connection between them. You will remark here, how artfully he hath substituted the effects of corruption for the causes of it; in order to engage every man of sense to recur himself to the first cause of these pretended causes. Observe also, how, in order to engage the reader to make his own reflections, he pretends to be ignorant of what he certainly must know, and what all historians have unanimously agreed on, that the depravation of the government and manners of the Athenians, were the effect of the fine speeches of their orators. It is therefore certain that, by attacking me in this manner, he hath plainly indicated the answers I might make to them.

This is, however, no more than a conjecture; which I will not undertake to warrant.

Mr.

Mr. Gautier himſelf probably would not be willing that I ſhould juſtify his erudition at the expence of his probity: but if he hath really been ſincere in his refutation of my diſcourſe, I cannot ſee how he can conſcientiouſly aſſume all the titles he is inveſted with, as profeſſor of hiſtory, profeſſor of the mathematicks, and member of the academy of Nancy.

I am reſolved therefore to make no anſwer to Mr. Gautier. I have given you a reaſon why I cannot give it a regular and ſerious reply: and it might be thought an ungrateful return for all the commendations Mr. Gautier hath honoured me with, to employ againſt the *ridiculum acri*, the bitter pleaſantry of irony. I am afraid, indeed, he hath but too much reaſon to complain of me in this reſpect already: at leaſt he could not be ignorant in writing his refutation, that he attacked a man, who ſet too little value on politeneſs, to diſguiſe his real ſentiments.

With regard to any thing elſe, I am ready to do Mr. Gautier that juſtice which is his due. His performance appears to me to be that of a man of genius and learning. Others may perhaps think there is philoſophy in it; for my part I find in it a good deal of erudition.

I am, Sir, yours ſincerely, &c.

P. S. I have juſt read, in the Utrecht Gazette of the 22d of October, a pompous expoſition of Mr. Gautier's performance; which ſeems calculated expreſsly to confirm my ſuſpicions. An author, who hath any confidence in the merits of his own work, would leave others to write encomiums on it, and confine himſelf

to

to the making only a good extract. That from Mr. Gautier's refutation is managed with so much art, that, though it touches only upon some trifling objects that I employed only by way of transition, yet there is not a single one concerning which a judicious reader can subscribe to the refuter's opinion.

It is not true, according to Mr. Gautier, that the vices of mankind have contributed to make history interesting. I may set aside the proofs of the argument, and in favour of my adversary only repeat the authorities.

Happy are the people whose kings have not been renowned in history.

When mankind grow wise, their history will be no longer entertaining.

Mr. Gautier very justly observes that a society, though composed of men truly virtuous, could not subsist without laws: and hence he concludes it is not true that "*if mankind were* "*not unjust, the study of jurisprudence would be* "*useless.*" It is strange that so learned a writer should confound jurisprudence with law, the study of the laws with the laws themselves.

I may again do the same with regard to facts. The Lacedemonians had neither counsellors nor pleaders; their laws were not even committed to writing. And yet they certainly had laws. I appeal to Mr. Gautier's erudition, to determine whether the laws were less observed at Sparta than in those countries which abound with lawyers. I shall not dwell upon all those minutiæ, which form Mr. Gautier's text, and are so formally displayed in the Gazette, but close with the following observation, which I submit to your examination:

Allow

Allow Mr. Gautier to be in the right as to every thing he has ſaid, and take every thing he has attacked out of my diſſertation; and my arguments will loſe nothing of their force. Whereas take from Gautier's refutation all that does not really affect the queſtion, and you will leave him nothing at all. I therefore ſay again, it is not neceſſary to make him any reply.

Paris, Novr. 1, 1751.

THE

THE FINAL ANSWER,

OF J. J. ROUSSEAU,

To those who have made Objections to his preceding Discourse.

Ne dum tacemus, non verecundiæ, sed diffidentiæ causâ, tacere videamur.

CYPRIAN. *contra* DEMET.

IT is with extreme reluctance that I contribute, by my disputes, to the entertainment of idle readers, who care but little about the truth: but the manner, in which it has been attacked, obliges me to engage again in its defence, that my silence may not be misconstrued by the multitude as a defeat, nor by the philosophers as want of respect.

I perceive that I shall be guilty of frequent repetitions, and that the publick in general will not excuse it. The sensible few, indeed, will say, This man has no need to be perpetually searching after new arguments, and this is a proof of the validity of those he hath already advanced *.

As

* There are some indisputable truths, which at first sight appear to be strange absurdities, and which

As every one of thoſe who have attacked me, hath not failed to wander from the point in diſpute, and to ſuppreſs thoſe eſſential diſtinctions I had made; it is conſtantly neceſſary to bring them back to the premiſes. I have drawn up, therefore, a ſummary of the propoſitions I have maintained, and which I ſhall maintain as long as I conſult no other intereſt than that of the truth.

The ſciences are the maſter-piece of human genius and reaſon. The ſpirit of imitation gave riſe to the fine arts, and experience hath brought them to perfection. We are indebted to the mechanick arts for a great number of uſe-

which always paſs for ſuch among the generality of people. Thus, if we ſhould tell an ignorant perſon that the ſun is nearer us in winter than in ſummer, or that it is really ſet before we loſe ſight of it; he would undoubtedly laugh at us. It is the ſame with the opinion I maintain. The moſt ſuperficial readers are the firſt to take part againſt me; the philoſophers are not ſo haſty; and, if I have the honour to have made any converts, it has been among the latter. Before I ventured to give my thoughts on this ſubject I had long and maturely weighed it; endeavouring to conſider it in every point of view. I doubt much whether any one of my adverſaries can ſay as much. At leaſt I do not perceive, in their writings, any of thoſe ſtriking truths which affect us not leſs with their force than their novelty, and which are the conſtant effects and proofs of ſufficient meditation. I may venture to ſay they have not ſtarted one reaſonable objection which I did not foreſee, and to which I had not prepared a ſatisfactory anſwer. Hence it is that I am reduced to the neceſſity of conſtantly repeating the ſame things.

ful inventions, which have added to the conveniencies and pleasure of life. These are truths to which I very readily and sincerely subscribe. But now let us consider the relation which all these Sciences have to morals *.

If celestial beings were to cultivate these sciences, nothing but good would result from them: I say the same also of those superior geniuses which are formed to guide the rest of mankind. The learned, the virtuous Socrates

* *The Sciences make men gentle*, said a celebrated philosopher, whose works are sometimes sublime but alway profound, and breathe throughout a love for humanity. He hath said in these few words, and what is singular, without declamation, all that hath been advanced to the purpose in favour of literature. It is true the sciences do make men gentle; but gentleness, which is the most amiable of the virtues, is also sometimes a weakness. Virtue is not always gentle, but is capable of arming itself with proper severity against vice; it is inflamed with indignation against improbity.

Et le juste au méchant ne sçait point pardonner.

It was a very wise and prudent answer which a certain king of Lacedæmon made to those, who commended, in his presence, the goodness of his colleague Charillus. *Good!* said he, *How can he be good, when he knows not how to be terrible to the wicked?* Brutus was none of these meek, or gentle men. And who will presume to say, Brutus was not virtuous? On the other hand, we meet with many cowardly and pusillanimous souls; who have neither fire nor spirit, and are gentle only from their indifference both to good and evil. Such is that gentleness which a taste for literature at present inspires.

did honour to humanity But the vices of the generality of mankind have poiſoned the moſt ſublime ſciences, and rendered them pernicious to ſociety. The vicious deduce from them a number of hurtful things, and the virtuous little elſe. If none but Socrates had piqued himſelf on the ſtudy of philoſophy at Athens, the innocent blood of the juſt had not cried out for vengeance againſt that nation of arts and ſciences *.

It is a queſtion that will bear examination, whether the ſciences are advantageous to mankind? even ſuppoſing that what paſs under that appellation really merit it. But it would be a folly to pretend that the chimeras, errours and falſehoods of pretended philoſophers can be good for any thing. Shall we for ever continue to be impoſed on by mere words? Shall we never learn that our ſtudies, ſciences, learning, and philoſophy, are only empty monuments erected to human pride, and very unworthy of thoſe pompous titles given them?

In proportion as a taſte for theſe puerilities diffuſes itſelf over a nation, it loſes that of the ſolid virtues: for it is leſs trouble for men to

* Socrates loſt his life for having ſaid exactly the ſame things as I do. In the proſecution carried on againſt him, one of his accuſers pleaded in favour of the artiſts, another for the orators, and the third for the poets, and all in the pretended cauſe of the Gods. The poets, the artiſts, the fanaticks, the rhetoricians triumphed, and Socrates periſhed. I am afraid I did the preſent age too much honour, when I ſaid that Socrates, had he lived in it, would not have been compelled to drink poiſon.

diſtinguiſh

diſtinguiſh themſelves by prattling and declamation, than by virtuous manners; when virtue is diſpenſed with, if a man has but the art to make himſelf agreeable.

The more we are internally corrupt, the more we are externally delicate *; and thus it is that the cultivation of letters inſenſibly gives birth to politeneſs. Taſte riſes from the ſame ſource. The public approbation being the principal reward of literary labours, it is natural for thoſe who engage in them, to ſtudy the means of pleaſing. And to this ſtudy it is that elegance of ſtile, purity of taſte, the graces of expreſſion, and urbanity of ſentiment are owing.

You may call theſe things, if you will, a ſupplement to virtue; but you never can call it virtue itſelf; nay they can even rarely be ſaid to accompany it. There always ſubſiſted this difference, that he who rendered himſelf uſeful, laboured for others, and he who ſtrove merely to make himſelf agreeable, laboured only for himſelf. The flatterer, for example, ſpares no

* I never am preſent at the repreſentation of any of Moliere's comedies, but I admire the extraordinary delicacy of the audience. Every word that is a little free, or expreſſion though rather coarſe than obſcene, offends their chaſte ears: and I doubt not but the moſt corrupt are generally the moſt offended. Yet, if we make a compariſon between the manners of the age of Moliere and thoſe of the preſent, the reſult will not be to the advantage of the latter. When the imagination is once ſullied, every thing becomes an object of ſcandal. When all the good we have left, is in external ſhew, we take more than ordinary pains to preſerve appearances.

pains to pleaſe, and yet he is productive of nothing but evil.

Idleneſs and vanity, which gave birth to our ſciences, gave birth alſo to luxury. A taſte for luxury always accompanies that for letters; and a taſte for letters often that for luxury *. All theſe things are faithful companions, becauſe they are the product of the ſame vices. If experience did not agree with theſe demonſtrative propoſitions, it would be neceſſary to enquire the particular cauſes of that diſagreement. But the firſt idea of theſe propoſitions, is itſelf the effect of long meditation on known experience: and we have only to turn over the annals of the world to ſee how fully it is confirmed.

In the primitive ages mankind were very ignorant. How ſhall we venture to ſay they were corrupt, before the ſources of corruption were opened? It is to be perceived, through the veils of ſecurity and ruſticity that are thrown over ancient times and ancient people, that many of them poſſeſſed great virtues; and particularly a ſeverity of manners, which is an in-

* Some have objected to me the luxury of the Aſiatics, by a parity of reaſoning with thoſe who have objected the vices of ſome ignorant nations. But my adverſaries are all ſo unlucky as to miſtake even their facts, which make nothing againſt me. I know very well that the people of the Eaſt are no more ignorant than we are: but this does not hinder them alſo from being equally vain, or of writing nearly as many books. The Turks, who cultivate learning leaſt of any, reckoned among them no leſs than five hundred and eighty claſſical poets about the middle of the laſt century.

fallible

fallible token of their purity; as alſo ſincerity, hoſpitality, juſtice, and, what is very important, a deteſtation of debauchery *, the fruitful mother of all other vices. Virtue, therefore, is not incompatible with ignorance. Nor is it any more its conſtant companion; for there are many nations very ignorant and very vicious. Ignorance is no impediment either to good

* I have no deſign here to pay my court to the women; I freely conſent that they ſhould honour me with the epithet of pedant, ſo formidable to our philoſophical gallants. I am more coarſe, ſlovenly, unpoliſhed in my principles, and have an utter averſion to great talkers; ſo that I ſhall proceed to ſpeak the truth, perfectly at my eaſe.

Man and woman are formed to love, and be united to each other: but if we except the lawful union ſubſiſting between them, all commerce of love is a frightful ſource of diſorders to ſociety and to morals. It is certain that the women alone can bring us back to a ſtate of honour and probity. But they diſdain to receive from virtue that power and prerogative they would owe ſolely to their charms. Thus they act always wrong, and often ſuffer in themſelves the puniſhment due to this unjuſt preference. It is hardly to be conceived how, under ſo pure a religion, chaſtity is become a mean and monkiſh virtue, capable of rendering every man, and I had almoſt ſaid every woman, ridiculous that pretends to it; whereas among the Pagans, this virtue was held in univerſal eſteem, regarded as becoming in great men, and admired in their moſt illuſtrious heroes. I might name three, inferiour to none, and who ſetting religion out of the queſtion, have ſet memorable examples of continence; theſe are Cyrus, Alexander,

good or evil; but is only the natural ſtate of man †.

Now we cannot ſay ſo much in favour of ſcience. Every learned nation hath been corrupted, and this is alone a terrible argument

and the younger Scipio. Of all the rarities in the French king's cabinet, I would not give a farthing to ſee any but the ſilver target, which was given to the latter, by the people of Spain; and on which they had engraved the triumph of his virtue. It was thus peculiar to the Romans to ſubdue other nations as much by the veneration due to their morals, as by the efforts of their arms. It was thus the town of the Faliſci was conquered, and Pyrrhus, the conqueror, driven out of Italy.

I remember to have ſomewhere read a pertinent reply enough, which the Engliſh poet, Dryden, made to a young nobleman, who reproached him that in one of his tragedies, Cleomenes amuſes himſelf with mere idle talk, in a private converſation with his miſtreſs, inſtead of forming ſome enterprize more worthy of his paſſion. Now when I am tete a tête with a fair lady, continues his lordſhip, I always employ my time much better. I do not doubt it, my lord, replied Dryden, but then you muſt confeſs that you are no hero.

† I cannot forbear ſmiling to ſee ſo many learned men as have honoured me with their criticiſms, conſtantly objecting to me the vices of a multitude of ignorant nations; as if this were any thing at all to the purpoſe. Becauſe the ſciences have given birth to vice, doth it thence follow that ignorance muſt neceſſarily give birth to virtue! This may be a good argument enough among rhetoricians, or among the children which they ſet to refute me in my own country, but philoſophers ſhould reaſon in a different manner.

againſt

againſt it. But, as it is difficult to draw compariſons between different nations, on account of the great variety of objects that muſt enter into, and render them defective in point of exactitude, we ſhall be more certain of our facts, in purſuing the hiſtory of ſome one particular people, and comparing the progreſs of its knowledge with the revolutions of its manners. Now the reſult of this examination is, that the virtuous age of a people hath been always that of their ignorance, and that, in proportion as they became ſcholars, artiſts and philoſophers, they loſt their morals and their probity; nay have in this reſpect debaſed themſelves to a level with thoſe ignorant and vicious nations which are a ſcandal to humanity.

If it be ſtill inſiſted that there is a diſtinction to be made between them, I acknowledge it; there is one, and this it is. The barbarous nations, even thoſe without virtue, have yet always held it in veneration: whereas the learned and philoſophical have by degrees arrived at the pitch of turning it into ridicule, and treating it with contempt. When once a nation hath reached this point, it may well be ſaid to be at its higheſt criſis of corruption, and is paſt all remedy incurable.

Such is the ſummary of what I have advanced, and which, I conceive, I have proved. Take now a ſhort abſtract of the doctrines advanced by my opponents.

"Mankind are naturally wicked: they were "ſo before the formation of ſocieties, and "wherever they are not enlightened by ſci-"ence, but are abandoned to the faculties ſole-"ly of inſtinct, leading a mere animal life

" with the lions and bears, remain plunged in " barbarism and misery.

" In ancient times, Greece alone raised it- " self by its genius, to every thing that could " render a people respectable. The philo- " sophers formed its manners, and gave it " laws.

" Sparta, it is true, was poor and ignorant, " by institution and choice, but its laws were " very defective; its citizens had a great in- " clination to suffer themselves to be corrupt- " ed: its glory was not built upon a solid " foundation; it therefore soon lost its primi- " tive institutions, its laws and its morals.

" Athens and Rome degenerated in like " manner. The one yielded to the fortune of " Macedon; the other sunk under its own " grandeur, because the laws calculated for the " government of a small city were not formed " to govern the whole world. If it hath some- " times happened that the glory of great em- " pires hath not lasted long after letters have " flourished in them, it is because they were " arrived at the crisis of dissolution when lite- " rature began to be cultivated; it is besides " the fate of all human institutions not to re- " main long in the same state. Admitting " then, that a revolution in a people's laws " and morals have had an influence on such " great events; it does not thence follow that " the arts and sciences have contributed to " them. On the contrary, it is observable that " the progress and decay of literature, hath " always been proportionable to the rise and " fall of the state.

" This

" This truth is confirmed by the experience " of modern times; having before our eyes an " inſtance of a vaſt and powerful monarchy " in which the proſperity of the ſtate, the cultivation of the arts and ſciences, and military virtue have unitedly contributed to the " glory and grandeur of its empire.

" Our morals are the beſt that can be imagined; many vices are baniſhed from among " us; and thoſe which remain are inſeparable " from humanity, and are by no means the effect of the ſciences. Luxury hath nothing " alſo in common with the arts; ſo that the " diſorders they may occaſion ought not to be " imputed to them. Beſides luxury is neceſſary in great ſtates, and is of more utility " than diſadvantage, by employing the idle " and giving bread to the poor.

" Politeneſs ought to be rather numbered " among the virtues than the vices; it prevents " men from appearing what they are; a neceſſary caution to render them ſupportable to " each other. The ſciences have indeed ſeldom attained the end propoſed by them; " but they have at leaſt advanced, and ſtill " tend that way. Slow as our progreſs is alſo " towards the truth, it is nevertheleſs ſure and " certain.

" In fine, though it ſhould be true that the " arts and ſciences enervate and diminiſh our " courage; yet on account of the infinite advantages they procure us, they are ſtill preferable to that ſavage and barbarous virtue, " which is ſhocking to humanity."

I paſs over the uſeleſs and pompous review of theſe advantages; and to begin with the laſt

point, by a conceſſion that may prevent a great many words, I declare once for all that, if any thing can compenſate for a total corruption of manners, I am ready to own that the ſciences have done more good in the world than harm. Now let us proceed to the reſt.

I may, without running any great riſque, take it for granted that every thing which is aſſerted above is proved; ſince, of all thoſe aſſertions ſo boldly advanced there are very few that materially affect the queſtion, and ſtill fewer, from which any valid concluſion can be drawn againſt my opinion. Nay the greater part of them would even furniſh new arguments in my favour, if my cauſe ſtood in need of it.

In fact with regard to the 1ſt. If mankind be wicked by nature, it is poſſible, if you will, that the ſciences may do ſome good in their hands; but it is very certain that they will do a great deal of harm. We ought not to put a ſword into the hands of a madman.

2. If the ſciences ſeldom anſwered the end propoſed by them, there will be always more time thrown away, than uſefully employed in their cultivation. And though it were true that we had diſcovered the beſt methods to effect the purpoſe intended, the greater part of our attempts would be as ridiculous as that of a man, who becauſe he was certain of being able to work exactly to a plumb-line, ſhould therefore undertake to dig a well to the centre.

We ought not to be ſo much terrified at the thoughts of a life merely animal, nor to conſider it as the worſt ſtate into which we can fall;

fall; for it would certainly be better to reſemble a ſheep than an evil angel.

4. Greece owed its manners, and its laws, to philoſophers and legiſlators. Granted. I have ſaid an hundred times it is good to have philoſophers, provided the people in general did not trouble themſelves about philoſophy.

5. Not daring to advance that Sparta had not good laws, my adverſaries cenſure thoſe laws, as being defective; thus, in order to retort the reproaches, I have caſt on the learned nations for being always corrupt, they reproach thoſe ignorant people for not having reached a ſtate of perfection.

6. The progreſs of literature is always proportionate to the flouriſhing ſtate of a nation. Be it ſo. At the ſame time be it remarked, that my opponents always talk to me of riches and grandeur; and I to them of morals and virtue.

7. Our morals are the beſt that men, vicious by nature like us, can be poſſeſſed of.—This may be. We have baniſhed many vices; I do not deny it. I did not accuſe my contemporaries of practiſing all the vices. They practiſe none but thoſe of mean ſouls: they are only hypocrites and knaves. As to thoſe vices, which require fortitude and perſeverance, I believe them to be incapable of them.

8. Luxury may be neceſſary to furniſh bread to the poor; but if there were no ſuch thing as luxury, there would be no poor*.—It employs the

* For an hundred poor people that luxury nouriſhes in our cities, an hundred thouſand periſh by

the idle——True, but when agriculture was reſpectable, none were either poor or idle; and the world was not ſo full of vice.

9. I ſee that my antagoniſts have the cauſe of luxury much at heart; which they affect, nevertheleſs, to ſeparate from that of the arts and ſcience. I will admit, then, ſince they will have it ſo, that luxury ſerves to the ſupport of ſtates juſt as the Cariatides ſerve to ſupport the palace they embelliſh; or rather juſt as the beams made uſe of to prop decayed houſes; which frequently compleat their downfal. Learn, ye that are wiſe and prudent, to forſake every houſe that is thus ſupported by props. This may ſerve to ſhew, how eaſy it would be for me to convert moſt of thoſe things, which are brought againſt me, to my own favour. But to deal frankly, I do not think them ſuf-

it in the country. The money which circulates in plenty among the artiſts and the rich, in order to furniſh them with ſuperfluities, prevents the circulation of any for the ſubſiſtence of the huſbandman: and the latter has not a coat to his back, merely becauſe theirs muſt be laced. The daily waſte of thoſe aliments which ſerve for the ſubſiſtance of mankind, is alone ſufficient to render luxury hateful. My adverſaries are lucky that the falſe delicacy of our language prevents my entering into thoſe particulars which would make them bluſh for the cauſe they have eſpouſed. We muſt have rich ſauces in our kitchens truly, and therefore the ſick want broth. We muſt have ſtore of rich liquors at our tables, and therefore the poor peaſant drinks nothing but water. We muſt have our periwigs loaded with powder, and therefore the poor want bread.

ficiently

ficiently well eſtabliſhed, to venture to take any advantage of them.

It is ſaid that mankind were originally wicked; whence it follows that man is wicked by nature *. This is an aſſertion of no ſmall importance, and in my opinion ought, if it could, to have been proved. The hiſtory of every people that one might venture to quote on this occaſion, is more in favour of the contrary opinion; and it requires conſiderable evidence to make me believe an abſurdity. Before thoſe horrid terms, *meum & tuum*, *mine* and *thine*, were invented; before there exiſted in the world that ſpecies of cruel and brutal men, whom we call *maſters*, and that other ſpecies of knaviſh, lying men, we call *ſlaves*; before there were men abominable enough to enjoy ſuperfluities while their fellow-creatures were periſhing with hunger; before a reciprocal dependence on each other obliged them all to become roguiſh,

* The following note is written purely for the philoſophers. The reader who is not a philoſopher is deſired therefore to paſs it over.

If mankind are naturally bad, it is clear that the ſciences will only make him worſe: ſo that their cauſe is loſt by this ſuppoſition. But it muſt be carefully obſerved that, although man be naturally good, as I believe, and have the happineſs to feel, it does not thence follow that the ſciences muſt be good for him: for every ſituation, in which a people may be diſpoſed to cultivate them, neceſſarily indicates the beginning of corruption, which is haſtily accelerated. So that a defect in the political conſtitution of a people effects that evil, which might have flowed from nature; and falſe prejudices may have the effect of bad inclinations.

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ſuſpicious and deceitful; I ſhould be glad to know wherein conſiſted thoſe vices and crimes, with which they are ſo earneſtly reproached. I am aſſured that the world have long been convinced that the golden age was chimerical. Why do not they aſſure me alſo that the world hath been long convinced that virtue alſo is chimerical?

I have ſaid that the Greeks were virtuous before they were corrupted by ſcience; nor will I retract what I have advanced on that head; although, in conſidering the matter more nearly, I am in ſome doubt of the reality of the virtues of ſuch a talkative ſet of people, as well as about the juſtice of the encomiums they were ſo fond of beſtowing on themſelves, and which I do not find confirmed by other teſtimony.——What ſay my antagoniſts to this?

They ſay that the early Greeks, whoſe virtue I have commended, muſt have been knowing and learned, ſince philoſophers formed their manners and gave them laws. But after this mode of reaſoning, I might ſay as much of all other nations. Had not the Perſians their Magi? the Aſſyrians their Chaldeans? the Indians their Gymnoſophiſts? the Celti their druids? Was not Ochus famous among the Phenicians; Atlas among the Perſians; and Zamolxis among the people of Thrace? Nay, have not many writers pretended that philoſophy itſelf took riſe among the Barbarians?

According to the reaſoning of my adverſaries, all theſe muſt have been learned people. *By the ſide of Miltiades and Themiſtocles we find*, I am told, *an Ariſtides and a Socrates.* Well, by

by the ſide, if you will, for what is that to me? However it is certain that Miltiades, Ariſtides and Themiſtocles, who were heroes, lived in one age, and Socrates and Plato, who were philoſophers, lived in another: indeed the publick ſchools of philoſophy were no ſooner opened, than Greece, already debaſed and degenerated, had renounced its virtue, and ſold its liberty.

Proud Aſia ſaw its immenſe forces broken to pieces by a handful of men, whom philoſophy conducted to glory. It is true: the philoſophy of the ſoul conducts to true glory; but this is not learned from books. *Such is the infallible effect of intellectual improvements.* I beg the reader will be attentive to this concluſion. *The morals and laws of a people are the only ſource of true heroiſm.* So, then, we find the ſciences have nothing to do with it. *In a word, Greece owed every thing to the ſciences, and the reſt of the world every thing to Greece.* Neither Greece nor the world owed any thing then to the wiſdom of their laws or the purity of their manners. I beg my adverſaries pardon, but it is impoſſible to overlook ſuch palpable ſophiſtry.

Let us examine, for a moment, that preference, which is affected to be given to Greece above all other nations; and which ſeems to be made a very capital point. *I will admire, if you pleaſe, a people who ſpend their lives in war or in the woods, who live on pulſe, and dwell in caverns.* This admiration is, in fact, very worthy of a true philoſopher: it belongs only to a blind and ſtupid people to admire thoſe who paſs their days, not in defending their own liberty, but in reciprocally cheating and betray-

ing one another, in order to gratify their effeminacy or ambition; those who have the presumption to live in idleness on the labour, on the blood of thousands of unhappy wretches, their fellow-creatures. *But is it among these barbarous people, we are to look for happiness?* It would be much more reasonable to look for happiness among them, than to look for virtue among others.

What a spectacle is presented us by a world, composed only of husbandmen, soldiers, hunters and herdsmen. A spectacle infinitely finer than that of a world, composed of cooks, poets, printers, artificers, painters and fiddlers. The world *soldier*, indeed, should be left out of the former list; for war is sometimes a duty, and was not intended to be made a trade of. Every man should be a soldier in defence of his liberty; but none to take away the liberty of others. To die for the good of one's country, is an employment too noble to be entrusted with mercenaries. *What, must we then live like bears and lions, in order to be worthy the name of men?* If I have the honour to have one impartial reader, who is at the same time a friend to truth, I beg of him just to cast an eye on the present state of society, and to remark who those are that live in it, like tygers and crocodiles. *Shall we magnify the mere faculties of instinct, tending solely to the preservation of our species, into virtues?* They are undoubted virtues, when they are under the guidance of reason and prudence; and more particularly so when they are engaged in the service of our fellow-creatures. *I see in them only animal virtues, little conformable to the dignity of our nature. The body is exercised, but the soul is depressed and enslaved.*

enſlaved. I may ſay with equal juſtice in taking a ſurvey of the pompous reſearches of our academics. " *I ſee in them nothing but ingenious* " *ſubtilties, little conformable to our nature. The* " *wit indeed is exerciſed, but the ſoul is depreſſed* " *and enſlaved.*" It is ſaid by ſome, " *take a-* " *way the arts, and what remains but the exerciſe* " *of the body and the paſſions?*" Pray, obſerve how reaſon and virtue are conſtantly left out of the queſtion. *The arts afford thoſe pleaſures to the mind, which are only worthy of it.* That is to ſay, they have ſubſtituted others in the place of virtue, ſtill more worthy of it.

In tracing the ſpirit of this reaſoning among my antagoniſts, we may obſerve, how a palpable enthuſiaſm for the marvellous powers of the underſtanding, hath reduced that other faculty, infinitely more ſublime and more capable to elevate the mind, even to nothing. Such is the conſtant effect of the cultivation of literature. I am pretty certain there is hardly a man of letters now living, who does not more admire the eloquence of Cicero than his patriotiſm; and hold him in greater veneration for his pleadings againſt Catiline than for having ſaved his country.

My opponents are viſibly embarraſſed, whenever they are led to ſpeak of Sparta. What would they not give that ſuch a fatal place had never exiſted! They who pretend that great actions are good for nothing but to be celebrated, what would they not give that thoſe of the Spartans had been forgotten! It is really a terrible thing for them, that in the very centre of Greece, ſo famous for owing all its virtue to its philoſophy, the ſtate whoſe morals were moſt

moſt pure, and whoſe government was of longeſt duration, ſhould be one in which there were no philoſophers. The Spartan manners were always propoſed as an example to the other ſtates of Greece: all which were corrupted, while virtue exiſted only in Sparta. All the reſt of Greece was enſlaved while Sparta remained free. This is provoking. At length, however, proud Sparta itſelf loſt its morals and its liberty, as well as learned Athens. Sparta was no more. What reply can I make to that?

To conſider two obſervations more, regarding Sparta; when I ſhall proceed to another ſubject. The firſt is: *After being many times on the point of becoming conqueror, Athens, it is true, was at length vanquiſhed: and indeed it is ſurprizing it was not conquered ſooner, as Attica is on the whole, an open country, incapable of its own defence except by ſuperior ſucceſs.* Athens ought to have been the victor for various reaſons. It was, in the firſt place, more extenſive and more populous than Lacedemon. Its revenues were conſiderable, and it had many tributaries. Sparta enjoyed none of theſe advantages. Athens had, in particular, by its ſituation an advantage of which Sparta was deſtitute; and which enabling it frequently to deſolate the Peloponeſe, ought alone to have conferred on it the empire of all Greece. It had a large and convenient harbour; and a formidable fleet, which it owed to the care of that clown Themiſtocles, who did not even know how to play upon a flute. It is ſurprizing therefore that Athens, with all theſe advantages, ſhould nevertheleſs be vanquiſhed. But altho' the war of the Peloponeſus, which ruined Greece, did no honour to either

either of these republicks, but, with regard to the Lacedemonians, was a direct breach of the maxim of their sagacious founder, it was not to be wondered at that, in the end, true courage should prevail over all other resources, or that the reputation of the Spartans afforded them such as facilitated their victory. In truth, I am ashamed to know these things and to be under the necessity of mentioning them.

The other observation is no less remarkable: I shall therefore lay it *verbatim* before my readers.

"Let us suppose that all the states, of "which Greece was composed, had followed "the same maxims as that of Sparta, what re- "mains should we have now had of this cele- "brated country? The very name of it would "hardly have been known to us. They would "have disdained to form historians, who might "have transmitted their glory to posterity. "We should have been strangers to their savage "virtues; and it would of course, have been "indifferent to us whether they had ever exist- "ed or not. The numerous systems of philo- "sophy that have exhausted all the possible "combinations of our ideas; and which, if "they have not much extended the limits of "the human mind, have taught us at least "where those limits are fixed: those master- "pieces of eloquence and poesy, which have "pointed out all the inlets to the human heart: "those useful or agreeable arts, which serve to "the embellishment of life; in fine, the inesti- "mable tradition of the sentiments and actions "of all those great men, who have contributed "to the glory or happiness of their fellow crea- "tures: All these intellectual treasures had

"been

" been for ever loſt *. Ages would have been " heaped upon ages, and the ſeveral generations " of mankind have ſucceeded each other like " thoſe of mere animals; without being of " any advantage to poſterity; leaving behind " them only a confuſed remembrance of their " exiſtence: the world would have grown old, " and mankind have ſtill remained in a ſtate of " infancy." In anſwer to this, let us ſuppoſe, in our turn, that a Spartan, influenced by the force of the above reaſons, had a mind to repreſent them to his compatriots: let us thus conceive the terms of his diſcourſe, he might addreſs to them in the public place of Sparta.

* Pericles poſſeſſed conſiderable talents, great eloquence, magnificence and taſte. He embelliſhed Athens with excellent ſculptures, ſumptuous edifices, and maſter-pieces in all the arts. Hence, God knows how he has been flattered by the herd of writers. It ſtill remains a doubt, however, whether Pericles was a good magiſtrate; for in the government of ſtates, a proper regulation of manners is of more conſequence than the erecting of ſtatues. I ſhall not amuſe myſelf, to inveſtigate the ſecret motives for the war of Peloponeſus; which was the ruin of the republick: I enquire not whether the advice of Alcibiades was well or ill founded, nor whether Pericles was juſtly or unjuſtly accuſed of malverſation. I will aſk only whether the Athenians became worſe or better under his government. I ſhould be glad to know the name of a ſingle individual among the citizens, among the ſlaves, or even among his own children, that he made an honeſt man. Yet this appears to me the chief duty of a magiſtrate and a ſovereign. For the ſureſt way of making men happy, is not to adorn their towns, nor to make them rich; but to make them good and virtuous.

" Reflect,

" Reflect, my fellow-citizens, on your " blindneſs and infatuation. I behold, with " ſorrow, that you trouble yourſelves only to " acquire virtue; to exert your courage and " maintain your liberty: forgetting that moſt " important duty of providing for the amuſe- " ment of the idle in future ages. Say, of " what uſe is your virtue, unleſs to make a " noiſe in the world? To what purpoſe is it " that you are virtuous, if nobody talks of " you? What will it ſignify to poſterity " that you devoted yourſelves to death in the " fields of Thermopile, for the ſafety of the " Athenians, if you leave not behind you, like " them, ſyſtems of philoſophy, poems, comedies " and ſtatues? Abandon, therefore, thoſe laws " that are good for nothing but to make us " happy. Employ your endeavours to make " yourſelves talked on, when you are no more; " and forget not that if great men are not cele- " brated, their lives and exploits are uſeleſs."

Such, I imagine, would be in ſubſtance the oration of our Spartan, if the Ephori would but give him leave to finiſh his harangue. The above-quoted paſſage is not the only one, in which we are informed by my opponents that virtue is of no other uſe than to make the world talk of us. To this I may add their boaſt of the ſyſtems of the philoſophers, becauſe they are immortal and are conſecrated to the admiration of all ages. *While the notions of other men are obliterated with the time and circumſtance that produced them. With three-fourths of mankind, the one day is effaced by the morrow, leaving not the ſlighteſt trace behind.* May we not ſay, however, that there remain ſome traces in the teſtimony

mony of a good conſcience, in the remembrance of the unhappy whom we have relieved, in the good actions we may have done, and in the eye of that beneficent and almighty Being whom we have ſilently ſerved? *Dead or living*, ſaid Socrates, *the virtuous man is never forgotten by the Gods*. It may be anſwered, perhaps, that it is not on this kind of reflections my adverſaries meant to inſiſt: but for my part, I ſay that no other kind of reflections are worth inſiſting on *.

It is eaſy to conceive that, as they ſet little ſtore by Sparta, they do not ſet much more on the ancient Romans. *It is admitted, that they were great men, altho' they were capable of doing but little actions.* Upon this footing I muſt confeſs, it is long ſince there were any great men in the world. Their courage and temperance are reproached with not being real virtues, but

* The greater part of our modern wits are fond of diſplaying their ingenuity in obſcuring the glory and generous actions of the ancients; giving them ſome baſe and invidious turn, and imputing them to different and vain motives. Prodigious ſubtlety this! to take the moſt excellent and ſimply virtuous action, and account for it from a number of probable vicious intentions. But in this our wits rather act abſurdly than maliciouſly. For my part, I would readily take as much pains to enhance the reputation of thoſe great men, as they take to detract from it. Nor would it be any forgery to beſtow honours on ſuch illuſtrious characters to the height of our invention; the greateſt efforts of which muſt be ſtill inferiour to their merit. It is the province of virtuous men to deſcribe virtue in its moſt captivating colours. Theſe are not the words of Rouſſeau; but *Montaigne*.

forced

forced and affected qualifications. And yet the writer who charges them with this defect, confeſſes a few pages after, that Fabricius deſpiſed the gold of Pyrrhus, and it is well known that the Roman hiſtory is full of examples of the facility, with which thoſe venerable warriors, their magiſtrates, might have enriched themſelves; who nevertheleſs conſtantly piqued themſelves on their poverty *.

With regard to courage; is it not well known that cowardice never hears reaſon, and that a poltroon never fails to fly, altho' ſure to be killed in his flight. *We may as well*, it is ſaid, *confine a ſtrong and robuſt man to be rocked in a cradle, as to reduce great ſtates to practiſe the petty virtues of petty republicks.* This is a mode of expreſſion not unfamiliar in modern courts. It had been well worthy a Tiberius or a Catherine de Medicis; and I doubt not that it frequently ſuggeſted itſelf to both.

It is not eaſily to be conceived that the moral world can be meaſured by a ſurveyor's theodolite. It cannot, however, be affirmed that the extent of a ſtate is altogether indifferent to the morals of its people. There is certainly ſome proportion between theſe things; I know not

* When Curius rejected the preſents of the Samnites, he told them he had much rather command thoſe who poſſeſſed gold, than be in poſſeſſion of it himſelf. Curius was in the right. Thoſe who love riches are born to be ſlaves, and thoſe who deſpiſe them, to be their maſters. It is not the power of gold that binds the poor to the rich, but the deſire of becoming rich in their turn; for otherwiſe the poor would neceſſarily have the power over the wealthy.

whether

whether this proportion be inverſe *. Here is another queſtion well worthy of diſcuſſion; and which I believe may be juſtly looked upon as at preſent undecided, notwithſtanding the very poſitive air, more contemptuous than philoſophical, with which it is here decided in a few words.

This, continues the author, *was the phrenzy of Cato. Biaſſed by the hereditary prepoſſeſſions of his family, he declaimed all his life-time, againſt the practices of the world, and fought and died without effecting any thing uſeful to his country.* I know not whether Cato did any thing or not for his country; but I know that he did a great deal for mankind in general, affording it an example of virtue, perhaps the moſt pure that ever exiſted. He hath given a leſſon for thoſe, who ſincerely love true honour, to reſiſt the vices of their age, and to deteſt that horrid maxim which prevails in the world, and inculcates the neceſſity of following the general example of others. *At Rome we muſt do as Rome does*; a maxim that would lead thoſe who adopt it great lengths, if they had the misfortune to fall into the company of a gang of highwaymen. Poſterity will one day read with aſtoniſhment that in this age of ſcholars and philoſophers the moſt virtuous of mankind was turned into ridicule and treated as a madman, becauſe he refuſed to ſtain his great ſoul with the crimes of his contemporaries; becauſe he would

* My adverſaries think to impoſe on me with their contempt for little ſtates. Are they not afraid that I ſhall aſk them, whether there ought to be great ones?

not

not villainously join with Cæsar and the other public robbers of his time.

We have just seen in what manner our modern philosophers speak of Cato. Let us compare what was said of him by the ancients. *Ecce spectaculum dignum ad quod respiciet, intentus operi suo, deus. Ecce par deo dignum: vir fortis cum mala fortunâ compositum. Non video, inquam, quod habeat in terris Jupiter pulchrius, si convertere animum velit, quam ut spectat Catonem, jam partibus non semel fractis, nihilominus inter ruinas publicas erectum.*

Of other primitive Romans it hath been elsewhere said, *We admire the characters of Brutus, Lucretia, Virginius and Scevola.* It must be confessed this is something in the present degenerate age. *But we admire more, a powerful and well-govern'd state.* A powerful and well-governed state! Doubtless, and so do I too. *In which the citizens are not condemned to the exercise of such cruel virtues.* I understand you. It would certainly be more commodious to live under a government, whose constitution would dispense with our being rigidly virtuous. But if the citizens of such an admired state, should be reduced by some misfortune, either to renounce virtue entirely, or to put such cruel virtues in practice, and should have the fortitude to do their duty, would this be a reason for admiring them less? Let us take a survey of the example, which is most offensive to the delicacy of the present age; I mean the conduct of Junius Brutus, who sentenced his own sons to death, for having conspired against the state, at a crisis, when the slightest sinister accident threatened its ruin. It is certain that, if he

had pardoned them, his colleague would have pardoned all their accomplices, and the republick would have been undone. But it may be aſked, of what conſequence was that? We will ſuppoſe it then a matter of indifference; that the ſtate had ſtill ſubſiſted; and that Brutus, in the courſe of his office, was about to condemn another criminal; might not the culprit with great juſtice addreſs him as follows: "Where-"fore, conſul, do you condemn me? Am I "guilty of a greater crime than betraying my "country! And am not I alſo your child?" I ſhould be glad to know what reply Brutus could make to ſuch a remonſtrance.

Will it be ſaid that Brutus ought to have abdicated the conſulſhip, rather than have condemned his own children? I anſwer, No. On the contrary, I affirm that every magiſtrate or governor, who ſhould leave his poſt at ſuch a criſis and abandon his country in ſuch a perilous ſituation, would be a traitor and worthy of death. There is no medium in theſe things: Brutus muſt have been infamous, or Titus and Tiberinus have fallen by his order, under the axe of the lictors. Not that I preſume there are many perſons, who would have had the reſolution to have acted like Brutus. My antagoniſts do not indeed openly declare in favour of the latter ages of the Roman republic; they evidently betray that preference however which they give to the former; and ſeem to be as much at a loſs to diſcover the character of the hero through the rude ſimplicity of the firſt, as I have to diſcover that of men of probity through the pomp and ſplendour of the latter.

To Fabricius, indeed, they oppoſe Titus; but

but they leave out a neceſſary diſtinction; which is; that, in the time of Pyrrhus, every Roman was a Fabricius; whereas in the reign of Titus, he was the only honeſt man among them *. I will not inſiſt on the heroic actions of the primitive Romans, nor the criminal ones of their ſucceſſors; but I cannot forbear mentioning that virtue was honoured by the former, and deſpiſed by the latter. For it is to be obſerved, that when honorary crowns were beſtowed on the conquerors in the games at the circus, they no longer adjudged the civic crown to him who ſhould ſave the life of a citizen.

Not that this degeneracy was confined to the Romans. There was a time, when the republick of Athens was rich enough, to defray the immenſe expence of its public ſhews and entertainments; to reward at a very conſiderable rate, authors, comedians, and even the ſpectators: this was the very time, nevertheleſs, at which the ſtate was diſtreſſed for money to defend itſelf againſt the enterprizes of Philip.

To come, at length, to modern examples; in adducing which, however, I ſhall not adopt the mode of argumentation made uſe of by my antagoniſts. I muſt yet obſerve, that they

* If Titus had not been emperor, we ſhould never have heard a word about him or his virtue: for he would have continued to follow the general example. He became indeed a man of probity only, by riſing to a ſtation which authorized him to ſet a better. Privatus atque etiam ſub patre principe, ne odio quidem, ne dum vituperatione publicâ caruit. At illi ea fama pro bono ceſſit, converſaque eſt in maximas laudes.

procure to themſelves no very honourable advantage, in preventing their adverſary from bringing his reaſons, inſtead of refuting them when brought.

I ſhall not enter into a particular examination, alſo, of all the reflections, which my opponents have been at the trouble of making, on luxury, on politeneſs, on the admirable methods of educating our children *, on thoſe of improving our knowlege, on the utility of the ſciences, the agreeableneſs of the fine arts, and on other points; of which the greater part do not affect my arguments; while others either refute themſelves, or have been long ſince refuted. I ſhall content myſelf with the citation of a few paſſages, picked up in different places, and which appear to want ſome explanation. At the ſame time, I ſhall be under the neceſſity of contenting myſelf with paraphraſes, from the impoſſibility of purſuing accurately

* It muſt not be aſked, if parents and tutors are not very careful to keep ſuch dangerous writings as mine out of the hand of their children and pupils. In fact what terrible diſorders might not follow, if theſe pupils ſo admirably educated ſhould come to diſdain all the fine things they have been taught, and prefer in good earneſt, virtue to knowledge? This puts me in mind of a Lacedemonian preceptor, who, being aſked in raillery, what he would teach his pupil, anſwered, *I will teach him to love what is virtuous.* If I ſhould meet with ſuch a tutor among us, I ſhould whiſper in his ear, to take care of what he ſaid; for otherwiſe he would have no diſciples. I ſhould bid him ſay, he would teach them to prattle agreeably, and I would anſwer for it he'd make his fortune.

thoſe

thoſe arguments of which I cannot diſcover the thread.

It is pretended that thoſe ignorant nations, which have had *ſome ideas of glory and virtue, are very ſingular exceptions that afford no preſumption in diſcredit of the ſciences.* Very well! But it is certain that all the learned nations, with their fine ideas of glory and of virtue, have ever loſt both the love and the practice of it. That is without exception, let us proceed to the proof. *To be convinced of this, let us caſt our eyes over the immenſe continent of Africa, which no mortal hath been daring enough to penetrate, nor lucky enough to attempt it with impunity.* That is as much as to ſay, becauſe we cannot penetrate the continent of Africa, and are therefore ignorant of what paſſes there, we muſt conclude the people to be over-run with vices. Had we found out the means of conveying our own thither, we might indeed have juſtly drawn ſuch a concluſion. If I were a chief of any of the people of Negroeland, I declare I would erect a gallows on the frontiers of my country; on which I would hang up the firſt European that ſhould attempt to enter it, and the firſt native that ſhould dare to leave it*. *America preſents us with ſpectacles no leſs diſgraceful to human nature.* Particularly ſince the Europeans have been there. *There may be*

* It may be aſked perhaps, what evil a citizen is guilty of, who leaves it with a deſign never to return? In the firſt place, he ſets a bad example to others; and he hurts himſelf by the vices he goes in ſearch of. It is therefore the buſineſs of the law to prevent both; for it is certainly better for people to be hanged than to be wicked.

counted an hundred barbarous, or ſavage, people in ignorance, for one that is virtuous. Be it ſo. Let us ſuppoſe we can count one. But of people that have cultivated the ſciences, and have been at the ſame time virtuous, the world hath never ſeen even a ſingle one. *The earth, abandoned and without culture, is not therefore totally barren and idle; it produces poiſonous plants, and nouriſhes monſters.* This it always begins to do, in thoſe places, where a taſte for the frivolous arts, occaſions that of agriculture to be neglected. *The ſoul,* it may in like manner be ſaid, *is not barren and idle when abandoned by virtue. It produces fictions, romances, ſatires, verſes, and nouriſhes the vices.*

If the barbarians have ever made conqueſts, they have been always ſuch as were unjuſt. Pray, what were the Europeans when they firſt made the admired conqueſt of America? But, how is it poſſible that a people, poſſeſſed, and knowing the uſe, of cannon, charts and compaſſes, ſhould commit injuſtice! Will it be ſaid that the event diſplayed the ſuperior valour of the conquerors? No, it only diſplayed their art and ingenuity; it ſhewed that an artful and cunning man might deduce that ſucceſs from his induſtry, which a brave one deduces only from his valour. To ſpeak without partiality; which are we to conclude the moſt courageous, the odious Cortez, ſubduing Mexico, by the help of gun-powder, artifice, and perfidy; or the unfortunate Guatimozin, ſtretched out, by the honeſt Europeans, over burning coals, and ſaying in raillery to one of his officers, who complained at being treated in the ſame manner, "How, Sir, am I upon a bed of roſes?"

To

To say that the sciences take rise from idleness, is a palpable abuse of terms, they arise indeed from leisure, but they secure us from being idle. For my part, I don't comprehend this distinction between leisure and idleness. But this I know very well, that no honest man can pretend to have leisure, while there is any good for him to do; while he hath a country to serve; while there are unhappy persons to relieve; and I defy my antagonist to find any honest sense, which can, agreeable to my principles, be given to the word leisure.

The husbandman, whose necessities attach him to the plough, is not more busy than the geometer or the anatomist. No, nor the child who is employed in building himself a house of cards, but much more usefully. *Under the pretence that bread is necessary to life, ought the whole world to apply to agriculture?* Why should they not? let them live on pasturage, if it be proper for them; I had much rather see men quietly browzing on the herbage of the fields, than devouring one another in towns and cities. It is certain that, were they such as I require, they would resemble the brutes more than they do; and as they are, they more resemble mankind.

A state of ignorance is a state of fear and want. We are so weak that in such a state every thing seems dangerous; death thunders over our heads, and lurks in the grass that we tread under feet. When we fear every thing, and want every thing, what disposition can be more natural than a desire to know every thing? We need only reflect on the continual apprehensions and inquietudes of physicians and anatomists, about their health, to know whether our knowledge serves us as a se-

curity againſt the fear of danger. On the contrary, as ſcience always diſcovers to us more dangers than it teaches us how to avoid, it is no wonder, that its cultivation ſhould only encreaſe our apprehenſions and make us puſillanimous. The animals live in a perfect ſecurity in this reſpect, and are not at all the worſe for it. A heifer hath no need to ſtudy botany, to enable her to chooſe her proper food; and the wolf devours his prey without any apprehenſions of indigeſtion. In anſwer to all this, ſhall we venture to take the part of inſtinct againſt reaſon? This is exactly the queſtion I would myſelf aſk.

It ſeems, we are told this, as if there were too many labourers, and that we were afraid of being in want of philoſophers. I will aſk, in my turn, whether there be any fear that the lucrative profeſſions ſhould want profeſſors? It is bad to know the influence of avarice. Every thing, from our very infancy, induces us to the uſeful profeſſions, and what prepoſſeſſions have we not to overcome? What fortitude doth it not require, to dare to be only a Deſcartes, a Newton, or a Locke?

Leibnitz and Newton died in poſſeſſion of wealth and honours; of which they merited ſtill more. Shall we ſay that it was from their moderation they were not elevated to the rank of ploughmen? I am well enough aware of the influence of avarice to know that every thing induces us to the lucrative profeſſions; and therefore, I ſay, draws us off from the uſeful ones. An Hebert, a Lafrenaye, a Dulac, and a Martin, get more money by their frivolous arts in one day, than the huſbandmen of a whole province can earn in a month. I might

propoſe

propose a very singular problem with regard to the passage I am now considering; this is, to take away the three first lines, which are quoted from me, and then to leave any one to guess whether it is cited from my writings or those of my antagonists.

Good books are the only security of weak minds, that is to say, of three fourths of mankind, against the contagion of bad example. In the first place, the learned set many more bad examples than they write good books. Secondly, there will be always more bad books than good; and thirdly, the best directors which simple honest people can follow, are reason and conscience. *Paucis est opus litteris ad mentem bonam.* As to those whose intellects are dull and whose conscience is hard, reading will never be of any use to them. In short, there are no books in the world but those of religion, that are good for any thing to any body, and these are those only which I have not condemned.

It is attempted to make us regret the want of the education of the Persians. Please to observe that it is Plato who attempts this. I thought it necessary to screen myself behind the authority of that philosopher, but I see that nothing can screen me from the animosity of my adversaries. *Tros Rutulusve fuat:* they had rather wound one another, than give me the least quarter; and thus do themselves more mischief than me*.

This

* I have had in my head a new scheme of defence, and I will not answer for it, that shall not be, some time or other, weak enough to execute it. This defence will be composed only of arguments

This education was founded, it is said, on ignorant and barbarous principles, because it prescribed peculiar masters for the exercise of every virtue, whereas virtue is indivisible; because it is to be instilled, not to be taught: the business of education being to excite our love to the practice of it, and not merely to demonstrate its theory. How many things suggest themselves, in answer to this passage! but we must not do the reader so much injury as to say here, every thing that is to be said. I shall confine myself to two remarks. The first is, that, whoever would bring up a child, does not begin with telling him, it is necessary to practice virtue. He teaches him first to be true, to be temperate, to be courageous, &c. telling him, that in the union of all these consists virtue. Secondly, that it is we who content ourselves with demonstrating the theory of virtue; but the Persians taught the practice.

All the reproaches, which have been cast on philosophy, are so many attacks on the human understanding, I confess it; *or rather on the Author of nature, who made us such as we are.* If he hath made us philosophers, why should we take such a deal of pains to make ourselves so? *Philosophers are but men, and if they are mistaken, where is the wonder?* No wonder at all: the wonder will be when they are not mistaken. *Let us pity them, profit by their errors, and correct our-*

taken from the philosophers; whence it will follow, that if their reasons are bad, they are all mere babblers, as I affirm; and, on the contrary, if they are good, I shall have gained my cause.

ſelves. Yes, let us correct ourſelves, and philoſophize no longer. *There are a thouſand ways to errour, and but one that leads to the truth.* This is exactly what I myſelf have ſaid. *Ought we to be ſurpriſed that ſo many miſtakes have been committed in ſearch of this, and that it hath been diſcovered ſo late.* Is it then true that we have found it out at laſt?

An opinion of Socrates, is produced againſt us, which affects the ſophiſts, not the learned; not the ſciences, but the abuſe which may be made of them. What could be required more by one who maintains that, all our ſciences are mere abuſes; and all our ſages in reality ſophiſts? *Socrates was the chief of a ſect, who taught the art of doubting.* My veneration for Socrates would be greatly diminiſhed, if I could imagine he had the ridiculous vanity of ſetting himſelf up for the chief of a ſect. *And he juſtly cenſured the pride of thoſe who pretended to know every thing.* That is to ſay the pride of all the learned. *True ſcience is very far from any ſuch affectation.* That is true; but it is of our ſcience that I am ſpeaking. *Socrates is here a witneſs againſt himſelf.* This ſeems difficult to comprehend. *The moſt learned of the Greeks did not bluſh for his ignorance.* The moſt learned of the Greeks knew nothing by his own confeſſion. Draw what concluſion, therefore, you pleaſe concerning the reſt. *The ſciences have not, therefore, their ſource in our vices.* Our ſciences have, therefore, their ſource in our vices. *They do not, therefore, all take their riſe in human pride.* I have already explained myſelf on this head. *Vain declamation, which can only deceive prejudiced*

minds! I know not what anſwer to make to this.

In ſpeaking of the bounds of luxury, it is pretended that no inferences ſhould be drawn from paſt times to the preſent. *When men univerſally went naked, he who firſt put on wooden ſhoes was deemed a voluptuary. The outcry againſt corruption hath been conſtantly tranſmitted from age to age, without any idea being fixed to the term.* It is very true that, till the preſent age, luxury, though frequently prevalent, hath been looked upon at leaſt, as the fatal ſource of numerous evils. It was reſerved for M. Melon to be the firſt publiſher of the contrary obnoxious doctrine; the novelty of which acquired him more followers than the ſolidity of his reaſons. But I am not afraid to ſtand up alone, to combat theſe odious maxims, which tend but to the debaſement and deſtruction of virtue, and to add to the number of the rich and the miſerable, that is to ſay, to that of the vicious.

It was thought I ſhould be greatly embarraſſed, by being aſked, "To what limits I "would have luxury confined?" My opinion is that it is altogether unneceſſary. Every thing is the ſource of evil beyond what is phyſically neceſſary. Nature itſelf hath given us but too many wants; and it is, at beſt, a very great imprudence, to multiply them without an abſolute neceſſity, and by ſuch means to lay the ſoul under ſtill greater dependence. It was not without reaſon that Socrates, looking over a variety of merchandize and manufactures, congratulated himſelf on his having no need of any of thoſe things. It is indeed an hundred to one,

that

that the first man who wore wooden shoes was culpable in so doing, except he had got sore feet. As for us, we are too much obliged to wear shoes, not to be excused from practising virtue.

I have elsewhere said that I do not propose to subvert the actual state of society, to burn libraries, or destroy colleges and academies. To this I add here, that I as little propose to force mankind to content themselves with simple necessaries. I am very sensible I ought not to form the chimerical project of making people honest: but I thought it my duty to say, without disguise, what the truth demanded of me. I have seen the evil, and have endeavoured to trace the causes. Others more bold, or less prudent, may attempt to prescribe the remedy.

But I am weary and lay down my pen; to be taken up no more in this tedious dispute. I understand that a great number of authors* have employed themselves in endeavouring to refute me. I am very sorry that I cannot answer them all; but I conceive that I have here shewn, by the choice of those I have selected for this purpose†, that it is not fear which prevents my replying to the rest.

I en-

* There has been hardly a critical pamphlet, published for the amusement of youth, in which the writers have not done me the honour to mention me. I have not read them, indeed, and certainly never shall: but nothing shall hinder me from setting all the flore by them which they deserve; and I doubt not the whole is mighty pleasant.

† I am informed that Mr. Gautier has done me

I endeavoured to erect a monument, which owes not either its force or ſolidity to art. Truth alone, to which I have conſecrated it, ought to render it immoveable. And if I have once again repulſed the attacks which have been made on it, it hath been more with a view to do myſelf honour in defending it, than to afford it a ſupport, of which it ſtood in no need.

Be it permitted me, in taking leave of the reader, to proteſt to him, that nothing but the love of humanity and virtue gave riſe to this reply; and that the bitterneſs of my invectives againſt vices to which I have been a witneſs, hath ariſen only from the grief with which they affected me, and my ardent deſire to ſee mankind happy, and, above all, more worthy of being ſo.

the honour of a reply, though I did not anſwer him, but publiſhed my reaſons for not doing it. Probably Mr. Gautier did not think thoſe reaſons valid, as he hath taken the pains to refute them. I ſee that I muſt give up the point to Mr. Gautier, and readily confeſs I was in the wrong in not anſwering him. So that in this we are agreed. I regret indeed that I cannot repair that neglect; as it is unhappily now too late, and nobody would know what I was diſputing about.

* *

A DISSERTATION ON THE ORIGIN and FOUNDATION OF THE Inequality of Mankind.

Non in depravatis, ſed in his quæ bene ſecundum naturam ſe habent, conſiderandum eſt quid ſit naturale.

Ariſt. Politic. L. 2.

* *

DEDICATION

TO THE

Republick of GENEVA.

MOST HONOURABLE, MAGNIFICENT, AND SOVEREIGN LORDS,

CONVINCED that it belongs only to a virtuous citizen to present his country those acknowledgments it may become her to receive, I have been for thirty years past, endeavouring to render myself worthy to offer it some publick homage. In the mean time, a fortunate occasion supplying in some degree the insufficiency of my efforts, I have presumed rather to follow the dictates of zeal, in embracing it, than to wait till I should be authorized by merit. Having had the happiness to be born a subject of Geneva, how could I reflect on the natural equality of mankind, and that inequality which society hath introduced among them, without admiring the profound wisdom by which both the one and the

the other are happily combined in this ſtate, and contribute, in a manner the moſt conformable to the law of nature, and the moſt favourable to community, to the ſecurity of publick order and the happineſs of individuals? In my reſearches after the beſt and moſt ſenſible maxims, which might be laid down for the conſtitution of government, I was ſurprized to find them all united in the compoſition of yours; ſo that had I not been a fellow-citizen, I ſhould have thought it indiſpenſible in me to preſent ſuch a picture of human ſociety to that people, who of all others, ſeem to be poſſeſſed of its greateſt advantages, and to have beſt guarded againſt its abuſes.

Had I been to make choice of the place of my birth, I ſhould have preferred a community proportioned in its extent to the limits of the human faculties; that is to the poſſibility of being well governed: in which every perſon being capable of his employments, no one ſhould be obliged to commit to others the truſt he ought to diſcharge himſelf: a ſtate in which its individuals might be ſo well known to each other, that neither the ſecret machinations of vice, nor the modeſty of virtue ſhould be able to eſcape the notice and judgment of the publick; and in which the agreeable cuſtom of ſeeing and knowing each other, ſhould occaſion the love of their country to be rather an affection for its inhabitants than for its ſoil.

I ſhould have choſen for my birth-place a country, in which the intereſt of the ſovereign could not be ſeparated from that of the ſubject; to the end that all the motions of the machine

of

of government might ever tend to the general happineſs. And as this could not be the caſe, unleſs where the ſovereignty is lodged in the people, it follows that I ſhould have preferred a prudently-tempered democracy.

I ſhould have been deſirous to live and die free: that is, ſo far ſubject to the laws that neither I, nor any other body elſe, ſhould have it in our power to caſt off their honourable yoke: that agreeable and ſalutary yoke to which the haughtieſt necks bend the more tractably, as they are not formed to bear any other.

I ſhould have deſired, therefore, that no perſon within the ſtate ſhould be able to ſay he was above the laws; nor that any perſon without, ſhould be able to dictate ſuch as the ſtate ſhould be obliged to obey. For, be the conſtitution of a government what it may, if there be a ſingle member of it, who is not ſubject to the laws, all the reſt are neceſſarily at his diſcretion. And if there be a national chief within, and a foreign chief without, however they may divide their authority, it is impoſſible that both ſhould be duly obeyed and the ſtate well governed.

I ſhould not have choſen to live in a republick of recent inſtitution, however excellent its laws; for fear the government being otherwiſe framed than circumſtances might require, it might either diſagree with the new ſubjects, or the ſubjects diſagree with the new government; in which caſe the ſtate might be ſhaken to pieces and deſtroyed almoſt as ſoon as founded.

For it is with liberty as it is with ſolid and ſucculent aliments, or with generous wines, proper

proper to nouriſh and fortify robuſt conſtitutions accuſtomed to them, but pernicious, deſtructive and intoxicating to weak and delicate temperaments, to which they are not adapted. A people once accuſtomed to maſters, are not in a ſituation to live without them. If they attempt at any time to ſhake off their fetters, they ſeldom gain any thing in point of freedom; for, by miſtaking licentiouſneſs for liberty, to which it is diametrically oppoſed, they generally become greater ſlaves to ſome impoſtor, who loads them with freſh chains. The Romans themſelves, an example for every ſucceeding free people, were incapable of governing themſelves on their expulſion of the Tarquins. Debaſed by ſlavery, and the ignominious taſk impoſed on them, they were at firſt no better than a headſtrong mob, which it was requiſite to manage and govern with the greateſt wiſdom; ſo that, being accuſtomed by degrees to breathe the ſalutary air of liberty, their minds which had been enervated or rather brutalized under the burthen of ſlavery, might gradually acquire that ſeverity of manners and ſpirit of fortitude which rendered them at length the moſt reſpectable nation upon earth.

I ſhould have ſearched out for my country, therefore, ſome peaceful and happy republick, whoſe antiquity loſt itſelf, as it were, in the obſcurity of time: one that had experienced only ſuch ſalutary ſhocks as ſerved to diſplay and confirm the courage and patriotiſm of its ſubjects; and whoſe citizens, long accuſtomed to a prudent independence, were not only actually free, but worthy of their freedom.

I ſhould

I ſhould have made choice of a country, diverted, by a fortunate impotence, from the brutal love of conqueſt; and ſecured, by a ſtill more fortunate ſituation, from becoming itſelf the conqueſt of other ſtates: a free city ſituated between ſeveral nations, none of which ſhould find it their intereſt to attack it, yet all think themſelves intereſted in preventing its being attacked by others: a republick, in ſhort, which ſhould preſent nothing to tempt the ambition of its neighbours; but might reaſonably depend on their aſſiſtance in caſe of need. It would follow that a republican ſtate ſo happily ſituated as I have ſuppoſed, could have nothing to fear but from itſelf; and that, if its members accuſtomed themſelves to the exerciſe of arms, it muſt be to keep alive that military ardour and courage, which is ſo becoming among free-men, and tends to keep up their taſte for liberty, rather than thro' the neceſſity of providing for their own defence.

I ſhould have ſought a country, in which the legiſlative power ſhould be veſted in all its citizens: for who can better judge than themſelves of the propriety of the terms, on which they mutually agree to live together in the ſame community? Not that I ſhould have approved of Plebiſcita, like thoſe among the Romans; in which the principal perſons in the ſtate, and thoſe moſt intereſted in its preſervation, were excluded thoſe deliberations on which its ſecurity frequently depended; and in which, by the moſt abſurd inconſiſtency, the magiſtrates were deprived of privileges enjoyed in common by the loweſt citizens.

On

On the contrary, I ſhould have deſired that, in order to prevent ſelf-intereſted and ill deſigned projects, with any of thoſe dangerous innovations, which at length ruined the Athenians, no perſon ſhould be at liberty to propoſe new laws at pleaſure: but that this ſhould be the excluſive privilege of the magiſtrates; and that even theſe ſhould uſe it with ſo much caution, that the people on their part, ſhould be ſo reſerved in giving their conſent to ſuch laws; and that the promulgation of theirs ſhould be attended with ſo much ſolemnity, that before the conſtitution could be affected by them, there might be time enough given for all to be convinced, that it is the great antiquity of the laws which principally contributes to render them ſacred and venerable, that the people ſoon learn to deſpiſe thoſe which they ſee daily altered, and that ſtates, by accuſtoming themſelves to neglect their ancient cuſtoms under pretence of improvement, frequently introduce greater evils than thoſe they endeavour to remove.

I ſhould have particularly avoided a republick, as one that muſt of courſe be ill-governed, in which the people, imagining themſelves capable of ſubſiſting without magiſtrates, or at leaſt without inveſting them with any thing more than a precarious authority, ſhould imprudently reſerve to themſelves the adminiſtration of civil affairs and the execution of their own laws. Such muſt have been the rude conſtitution of the primitive governments, directly emerging from a ſtate of nature; and this was another of the vices that contributed to the diſſolution of the republick of Athens.

But

But I ſhould have choſen a community, the individuals of which, contented with the privileges of giving ſanction to their laws, and of unitedly deciding, from the repreſentations of the magiſtrates, the moſt important public affairs, ſhould have eſtabliſhed reſpectable tribunals; carefully diſtinguiſhed their ſeveral departments; and electing annually ſome of their fellow citizens, of the greateſt capacity and integrity, to adminiſter juſtice and govern the ſtate; a community, in ſhort, in which the virtue of the magiſtrates thus bearing teſtimony to the wiſdom of the people, they would mutually confer honour upon each other; in ſo much that if ever any fatal miſunderſtandings ſhould ariſe to diſturb the public peace, even theſe intervals of confuſion and error ſhould bear the marks of moderation, reciprocal eſteem, and of a mutual reſpect for the laws; certain ſigns and pledges of a reconciliation as laſting as ſincere. Such are the advantages, moſt honourable, magnificent and ſovereign Lords, which I ſhould have ſought in the country I had choſen for the place of my nativity.

And if providence had added to all theſe, a delightful ſituation, a temperate clime, a fertile ſoil, and the moſt charming views that preſent themſelves under heaven, I ſhould deſire only, to compleat my felicity, the peaceful enjoyment of all theſe bleſſings, in the boſom of this happy country; living in agreeable ſociety with my fellow-citizens, and exerciſing towards them from their own example, the duties of friendſhip, humanity, and every other virtue, that I might leave behind me the honourable

memory

memory of a worthy man, and an incorruptible and virtuous patriot.

But, if leſs fortunate or too late grown wiſe, I ſaw myſelf reduced to end an infirm and languiſhing life in other climates, vainly regreting that peaceful repoſe which I forfeited in the imprudence of my youth, I would at leaſt have entertained the ſame ſentiments within myſelf, tho' denied the opportunity of avowing and indulging them in my native country. Affected with a tender and diſintereſted love for my diſtant fellow-citizens, I ſhould have addreſſed from my heart, nearly in the following terms.

My dear countrymen, or rather my brethren, ſince the ties of blood unite moſt of us, as well as the laws, it gives me pleaſure that I cannot think of you, without thinking, at the ſame time, of all the bleſſings you enjoy, and of which none of you, perhaps, are ſo ſenſible of the value as I to whom they are loſt. The more I reflect on your ſituation, both civil and political, the leſs can I conceive that the preſent ſtate of human nature will admit of a better. In all other governments, even when they deliberate on ſubjects the moſt intereſting to the ſtate, they are always confined to ideal projects, or at leaſt to bare poſſibilities. But as to you, your happineſs is compleat. You have nothing to do but enjoy it; you require nothing more to be made perfectly happy, than to know how to be ſatisfied with being ſo. Your ſovereignty, acquired or recovered by the ſword, and maintained for two centuries paſt by your valour and wiſdom, is at length fully and univerſally

verſally acknowledged. Your boundaries are fixed, your rights confirmed and your repoſe ſecured by honourable treaties. Your conſtitution is excellent, being not only dictated by the profoundeſt wiſdom, but guaranteed by friendly and reſpectable powers. Your ſtate enjoys perfect tranquillity; you have nothing to fear either from wars or conquerors: you have no other maſter than the wiſe laws you have yourſelves made; and which are adminiſtred by upright magiſtrates of your own chuſing. You are neither ſo wealthy as to be enervated by effeminacy, and thence to loſe, in the purſuit of frivolous pleaſures, a taſte for real happineſs and ſolid virtue; nor yet are ye ſo poor as to require more aſſiſtance from ſtrangers than your own induſtry is ſufficient to procure you. In the mean time that darling liberty, which is not to be maintained in great ſtates, but by ſubmitting to the moſt exorbitant impoſitions, coſts you hardly any thing for its preſervation.

May a republick, ſo wiſely and happily conſtituted laſt for ever, as well for an example to other nations, as for the felicity of its own ſubjects! This is the only wiſh you have left to make; the only ſubject of your ſolicitude. It depends, for the future, on yourſelves alone, (not to make you happy, your anceſtors have ſaved you that trouble) but to render that happineſs laſting, by your prudence in its enjoyment. It is on your conſtant unanimity, your obedience to the laws, and your reſpect to the magiſtrates, your preſervation depends. If there remain among you the ſmalleſt ſeeds of emnity or diſtruſt, haſten to root them up, as an accurſed leaven; from which ſooner or later will reſult ſuch misfortunes as muſt be

the deſtruction of the ſtate. I conjure you all to examine the bottom of your hearts, and to hearken to the ſecret voice of your own conſciences. Is there any among you who can find, throughout the univerſe, a more upright, more enlightened and more reſpectable body than that of your own magiſtracy? Do not all its members ſet you an example of moderation, of ſimplicity of manners, of reſpect for the laws, and of the moſt ſincere reconciliation? Place, therefore, without reſerve that ſalutary confidence on ſuch wiſe ſuperiors, which reaſon ever owes to virtue. Conſider they are the objects of your own choice; that they juſtify that choice; and that the honours, due to thoſe whom you have exalted to dignity, are neceſſarily reflected back on yourſelves. Is there any among you ſo ignorant, or inattentive, as not to know that, when the laws loſe their force, and the magiſtrates their authority, neither the perſons nor properties of individuals are any longer ſecure. Why, therefore, ſhould you heſitate to do that chearfully and confidently, which your true intereſt, your duty and even common prudence will ever require.

Let not a culpable and pernicious indifference for the ſupport of the conſtitution, ever induce you to neglect, in caſe of need, the prudent advice of the moſt enlightened and zealous of your fellow-citizens: but let equity, moderation and firmneſs of reſolution continue to regulate all your proceedings; exhibiting you to the whole univerſe, as an example of a valiant and modeſt people, equally tenacious of their honour and their liberty. Beware particularly, as the laſt advice I ſhall give you, of ſiniſter conſtruction and calumniating reports, the ſecret

cret motives of which are often more dangerous than the actions at which they are levelled. The whole houſe will be awake and take the firſt alarm, given by a truſty and watchful maſtiff, who barks only at the approach of thieves; but we ever abominate the impertinent yelping of thoſe noiſy curs, who are perpetually diſturbing the public repoſe, and whoſe continual and ill-timed reports prevent our attending to them, when they may perhaps be neceſſary.

And you, moſt honourable and magnificent lords, you, the worthy and reſpectable magiſtrates of a free people, permit me to offer you in particular my duty and homage. If there be in the world, a ſtation capable of conferring honour on the perſons who fill it, it is undoubtedly that which virtue and talents combine to beſtow; that of which you have rendered yourſelves worthy, and to which you, have been promoted by your fellow-citizens. Their worth adds a new luſtre to yours; while being choſen by men, capable of governing others, to govern themſelves, I cannot help eſteeming you as much ſuperior to all other magiſtrates, as a free people, and particularly that over which you have the honour to preſide, is by its wiſdom and knowledge ſuperior to the populace of other ſtates.

Be it permitted me to cite an example; of which there ought to have exiſted better remains; an example which will be ever near and dear to my heart. I cannot recall to mind, without the moſt agreeable emotions, the perſon and manners of that virtuous citizen, to whom I owe my being, and by whom I was inſtructed, in my infancy, in the reſpect which

is due to you. I can imagine that I see him still subsisting on his manual labour, and improving his mind by the study of the sublimest truths. I see, lying before him, the works of Tacitus, Plutarch and Grotius, intermixed with the tools of his trade. At his side stands his darling son, receiving, alas with too little profit, the tender instructions of the best of fathers. But, tho' the sallies of youth occasioned me a while to forget his prudent lessons, I have at length the happiness to experience that, whatever propensity one may have to vice, it is not easy for an education, thus affectionately bestowed, to be ever entirely thrown away.

Such, my most honourable and magnificent lords, are the citizens, and even the common inhabitants of the country under your government; such are those intelligent and sensible men, of which, under the name of mechanicks and trades-people, it is usual, in other nations to entertain a false and contemptible idea. My father, I own it with pleasure, was in no wise distinguished from his fellow-citizens. He was only such as they are all: and yet, such as he was, there is no country, in which his acquaintance would not have been coveted, and cultivated even with advantage by men of the first distinction. It would not become me, nor is it, thank heaven, at all necessary for me to remind you of the regard which such men have a right to expect of their magistrates, to whom they are equal both by birth and education; and inferior only by that preference which they voluntarily pay to your merit, and in so doing lay claim on their part to *some* sort of acknowledgement.

It

It is with a lively ſatisfaction I underſtand that the greateſt candour and condeſcenſion attend, in all your behaviour towards them, on that gravity which becomes the ſagacious miniſters of the law; and that you ſo well repay them, by your eſteem and attention to the general welfare, that reſpect and obedience which they juſtly pay to you. This conduct is not only juſt but prudent; as it wiſely tends to obliterate many unhappy events, which ought to be buried in eternal oblivion. It is alſo by ſo much the more prudential, as it tends to make a generous and equitable people find a pleaſure in their duty; whilſt, naturally fond of doing you honour, thoſe who are the moſt zealous to maintain their own rights and privileges, are at the ſame time the beſt diſpoſed to reſpect yours.

It ought not to be thought ſurprizing that the governors of civil ſociety ſhould have the welfare and glory of their peculiar communities at heart: but it is uncommonly fortunate for them, when thoſe perſons who look upon themſelves as the magiſtrates, or rather the maſters of a more holy and ſublime country, demonſtrate their affection for the earthly ſpot which maintains them. I am happy in having it in my power to make ſo ſingular an exception in favour of my own country; and to rank, in the number of its beſt citizens, thoſe zealous depoſitaries of the ſacred articles of our eſtabliſhed faith; thoſe venerable paſtors whoſe powerful and captivating eloquence are ſo much the better calculated to enforce the maxims of the goſpel, as they are themſelves the firſt to put them in practice.

The whole world is informed of the great ſucceſs with which the oratory of the pulpit is cultivated at Geneva; but, being too much uſed to hear divines preach one thing, and ſee them practice another, few people have an opportunity to know how far the true ſpirit of Chriſtianity, holineſs of manners, ſeverity with regard to themſelves and indulgence to their neighbours, prevail throughout the whole body of our miniſters. It is, perhaps, in the power of the city of Geneva alone, to produce an edifying example of ſo perfect an union ſubſiſting between its clergy and men of letters. And it is in a great degree, on their wiſdom, their known moderation, and on their zeal for the proſperity of the ſtate that I build my hopes of its conſtant and perpetual tranquillity.

At the ſame time, I remark, with a pleaſure mixt with ſurprize and veneration, how much they deteſt the horrid maxims of thoſe holy and barbarous men, of whom hiſtory furniſhes us with more than one example; who, in order to ſupport the pretended prerogative of the deity, that is to ſay their own intereſt, have been ſo much the leſs ſparing of human blood, as they were more flattered their own in particular ſhould be always reſpected. I muſt not here forget that precious half of the republick, which makes the happineſs of the other; and whoſe tenderneſs and prudence preſerve its tranquillity and virtue. Amiable and virtuous daughters of Geneva, it will be always the lot of your ſex to govern ours. Happy, ſo long as your chaſte influence, ſolely exerciſed within the limits of conjugal union, is exerted only for the glory of the ſtate and the happineſs of the publick. It is thus the female ſex commanded

manded at Sparta; and thus that you deserve to command at Geneva.

What man can be such a barbarian, as to resist the voice of honour and reason, breathing from the lips of an affectionate wife? Who would not despise the tawdry charms of luxury, on beholding the simplicity and modesty of an attire, which, from the lustre it derives from you, seems to be the most favourable to beauty? It is your task to perpetuate, by the insinuating spirit of your manners, by the innocent and amiable influence of your conversation, a respect for the laws of the state, and harmony among individuals. It is yours to reunite divided families by happy marriages; and, above all things, to correct, by the persuasive mildness of your lessons and the modest graces of your discourse, those extravagancies which our young people pick up in other countries; from whence, instead of many useful things that come within the reach of their observation and practice, they bring home hardly any thing, beside a puerile air and ridiculous manner, acquired among loose women, except the admiration of I know not what pretended grandeur, a paultry indemnification for slavery, and unworthy of the real greatness of true liberty.

Continue, therefore, always to be what you are, the chaste guardians of our manners, and the gentle security for our peace; exerting on every occasion the privileges of the heart and of nature, to the advantage of moral obligation and the interests of virtue.

I flatter myself no sinister event will ever prove me to have been mistaken, in building on such a foundation my hopes of the felicity of my fellow-citizens and the glory of the re-

publick. It must be confessed, however, that with all these advantages, it does not shine with that exterior lustre, by which the eyes of the generality of mankind are affected; a puerile and fatal taste for which, is the most mortal enemy to the happiness and liberty of a state.

Let our dissolute youth seek elsewhere those transient pleasures which are followed by long repentance. Let our pretenders to taste, elsewhere admire the grandeur of palaces, the beauty of equipages, the sumptuousness of furniture, the pomp of public entertainments, with all the refinements of luxury and effeminacy. Geneva boasts nothing but men; such a sight has nevertheless its value, and those who have a taste for it, are by no means inferior to the admirers of any other merit.

Deign, most honourable, magnificent and sovereign lords, all and each, to receive, and with equal goodness, this respectful testimony of the interest I take in your common prosperity. And, if I have been so unhappy, as to be guilty of any indiscreet transport, in this glowing effusion of my heart; I beseech you to pardon, and impute it to the tender affection of a real patriot, and to the ardent and lawful zeal of a man, who places his own, and his greatest felicity in the prospect of seeing you happy.

I am, with the most profound respect; most honourable, magnificent and sovereign lords,

Chamberi, June 12, 1754.

Your most humble,
and most obedient servant
and fellow-citizen.

JOHN JAMES ROUSSEAU.

PREFACE.

OF all human ſciences the moſt uſeful and moſt imperfect, appears to me that of mankind: and I will venture to ſay, the ſimple inſcription on the Temple of Delphos contained a precept more difficult and important than is to be found in all the huge volumes of morality, that have been written. I conſider the ſubject of the following diſcourſe, as one of the moſt intereſting queſtions philoſophy can propoſe, and unhappily for us, one of the moſt perplexing for philoſophers to ſolve. For how ſhall we know the ſource of the inequality ſubſiſting among men, if we do not begin with the knowledge of mankind. And how ſhall man arrive at the proſpect of himſelf, ſuch as he was formed by nature, through all thoſe changes which the ſucceſſion of place and time muſt have produced in his original conſtitution? How ſhall he be able to ſeparate and diſtinguiſh, that which is eſſential to his nature, from what accident and improvement may have added to, or diverſified in, his primitive ſtate.

As the ſtatue of Glaucus, which was ſo diſfigured by time, by the ſeas and tempeſts, that it bore the reſemblance rather of a wild beaſt than a God; ſo the human ſoul, altered in the midſt of ſociety by a thouſand cauſes perpetually

recurring, by the acquiſition of a multiplicity of truths and errours, by the changes happening to the conſtitution of the body, and by the continual jarring of the paſſions, hath, if I may ſo ſpeak, loſt its original appearance, ſo as to be hardly known for the ſame. Inſtead of a Being, acting conſtantly from fixed and invariable principles; inſtead of that celeſtial and majeſtic ſimplicity, impreſſed on it by its divine Author, we find in it only the frightful contraſt of paſſion, miſtaking itſelf for reaſon, and of underſtanding totally perverted.

It is ſtill more cruel that, every improvement made by the human ſpecies removing it ſtill farther from its primitive ſtate, the more diſcoveries we make, the more we deprive ourſelves of the means of making the moſt important of all. Thus it is, in one ſenſe, from our very application to the ſtudy of man, that the knowledge of him is put out of our power.

It is eaſy to perceive that, it is in theſe ſucceſſive changes, which have happened to the conſtitution of man, we are to look for the origin of thoſe differences which now ſubſiſt among the ſeveral parts of our ſpecies; all which, it is allowed, are as equal among themſelves as were the animals of every kind, before phyſical cauſes had introduced thoſe varieties which are now obſervable among ſome of them.

It is, in fact, not to be conceived that theſe primary changes, to whatever cauſes they may be imputed, could have altered, all at once and in the ſame manner, every individual of the ſpecies. It is natural to think that, while the condition of ſome of them grew better or worſe, and they were acquiring various good or bad

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qualities not inherent in their nature, there were others who continued a longer time in their first situation. Such was doubtless the first source of the inequality of mankind; which it is much easier to point out thus in general terms, than to assign with precision the true causes of particular distinctions.

Let not my readers, therefore, imagine that I flatter myself with having seen what it appears to me so difficult to discover. I have here opened some arguments, and risked a few conjectures; but less from the hope of being able to solve the difficulty, than with a view to throw some light upon it, and of giving a true state of the question. Others may easily proceed farther in the same route, without finding it very easy to reach the end of their career. For, it is, by no means, a slight undertaking to distinguish properly between what is originally natural, and what is artificial, in the actual constitution of man; to form a just notion of a state, which exists no longer, perhaps never did exist, and probably never will; and of which, it is, nevertheless, necessary to have just ideas, in order to form a proper judgment of our present state. It requires, indeed, more philosophy than may possibly be imagined, to enable any one to determine exactly, what precautions he ought to take, in order to make solid observations on this subject; it appearing to me that a good solution of the following problem is not unworthy of the Aristotles and Plinys of the present age. *What are the experiments necessary to be made, in order to discover the natural state of man? And how are those experiments to be made in a state of society!*

So far am I from undertaking to solve this problem, that I think I have sufficiently considered the subject, to venture to declare beforehand that, it would require all the sagacity of our greatest philosophers to direct how such experiments are to be made, and the influence of our most powerful sovereigns to make them. A concurrence of which, we have very little reason to expect, especially attended with that perseverance, or rather succession of science and zeal, necessary on both sides to reach the end proposed.

These researches, so difficult to make, and which have been hitherto so little thought of, are, nevertheless, the only means which remain to obviate a multitude of difficulties, which deprive us of the knowledge of the real foundations of human society.

It is this ignorance of the nature of man, which casts so much uncertainty and obscurity on the true definition of natural justice: for, the idea of justice, says Burlamaqui, and more particularly that of natural justice, are ideas manifestly relative to the nature of man. It is therefore from this very nature itself, continues he, from the constitution and state of man, that we are to deduce the first principles of natural law.

We cannot without surprize and disgust remark how little the different Authors agree, who have treated this important subject. There can hardly be found any two, among the most serious writers, that are of the same opinion concerning it. I shall not insist upon what the ancient philosophers have advanced on this head; as one would imagine they had purposely

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engaged to contradict one another, in respect to the most fundamental principles. The Roman civilians subjected man and all other animals indiscriminately to the same natural law, because they considered, under that appellation, rather that law which nature imposes on herself than what she hath prescribed to others; or perhaps because of the particular acceptation of the term, law, among those Civilians; who seem on this occasion to have understood nothing more by it than the general relations, established by nature, between all animated Beings, for their common preservation. The moderns, understanding only by the term, law, a rule prescribed to a moral Being, that is to say intelligent, free and considered as to the relations in which he stands to other beings, have consequently confined the jurisdiction of natural law to man as the only animal endowed with reason. But, as in defining this law, almost every one hath taken a different method, they have established it on such metaphysical principles, that there are very few persons among us capable of comprehending them, much less of originally discovering them themselves. So that the definitions of these learned men, all differing in every thing else, agree only in this, that it is impossible to comprehend the law of nature, and of course to obey it, without being a very subtil casuist, and a profound metaphysician. All which is exactly the same as to say that, mankind must have employed, in the establishment of society, that knowledge which is with great difficulty, and by very few persons, to be acquired even in a state of society.

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Knowing so little, therefore, of nature, and so ill agreeing about the meaning of the word *law*, it would be difficult for us to fix upon a good definition of the law of nature. Thus all the definitions we meet with in books, setting aside their defect in point of uniformity, have yet another, in that they are derived from many kinds of knowledge, which men by nature do not possess, and from advantages of which they can have no idea when they have once departed from that state. Our modern civilians begin by enquiring, what rules it would be expedient for men to agree to, for their common interest; and then give the name of natural law to a system composed of these rules, without any other proof of their originality, than the utility which would result from their being universally practised. This is undoubtedly a commodious way of making definitions, and of explaining the origin and natural fitness of things, by the accidental and almost arbitrary convenience of them.

But so long as we are ignorant of the natural state of man, it is in vain for us to attempt to determine either the law originally prescribed to him, or that which is best adapted to his constitution. All we can know with any certainty respecting this law, is that, in order to its being a law, not only the will of those it obliges, must be sensible of its obligation in their submitting to it; but also that, in order to its being natural, it must come directly from the voice of nature.

Throwing aside, therefore, all those scientific books, which teach us only to look upon men,

men, in the light wherein they have placed themſelves, and contemplating the firſt and moſt ſimple operations of the human ſoul, I think I can perceive in it two diſtinct principles of action, prior to reaſon one of them deeply intereſting us in our own welfare and preſervation, and the other exciting a natural averſion to ſee any other ſenſible being, and particularly any of our own ſpecies, ſuffer pain or death. It is from the concurrence and combination, which the underſtanding is capable of forming between theſe two principles, without its being at all neceſſary to annex that of ſociability, that all the rules of natural equity appear to me readily deducible; rules which our reaſon is afterwards obliged to re-eſtabliſh on other foundations, when by its ſucceſſive efforts to the improvements of ſcience, it hath ſuppreſſed the voice of nature.

In proceeding thus, we ſhall not be obliged to make man a philoſopher, before he is made a man. His obligations toward other Beings are not only dictated to him by the late and tedious leſſons of wiſdom; but ſo long as he does not reſiſt the internal impulſe of compaſſion, he will never hurt any other man, nor even any animate creature, except on thoſe lawful occaſions, in which his own preſervation is concerned, and he is obliged to give himſelf the preference.

By this method, alſo, we may terminate the ancient diſputes, concerning the participation of other animals in the law of nature: for it is clear that being deſtitute of knowledge and free-will, they are not recognizable to that law; as they partake, however, in ſome meaſure of

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our nature, in conſequence of the ſenſibility with which they are endowed, they ought to partake equally of a right to natural juſtice; ſo that mankind are ſubjected to a kind of moral obligation even toward the brutes. It appears, in fact, that my natural obligation to do no injury to my fellow creatures is founded leſs on their being rational than ſenſible creatures: and this quality of ſenſibility, being common both to men and beaſts, ought to entitle the latter at leaſt to the privilege of not being wantonly abuſed by the former.

The very ſtudy of the origin of man, of his real wants, and the fundamental principles of his duty, is beſides the only proper method we can take to obviate a number of difficulties, which preſent themſelves on the origin of moral inequality, on the true foundations of the body politic, on the reciprocal rights of its members, and many other ſimilar topicks equally important and obſcure.

In taking a view of human ſociety with a calm and diſintereſted eye, it ſeems, at firſt, to preſent us only with a proſpect of the violence of the powerful and the oppreſſion of the weak. The mind is ſhocked at the cruelty of the one, or is induced to lament the blindneſs of the other; and as nothing is leſs permanent in life than thoſe external relations, which are more frequently produced by accident than wiſdom, and which are called weakneſs or power, riches or poverty, all human eſtabliſhments appear at firſt glance to be founded merely on moving banks of quick-ſand. By taking a nearer ſurvey of them, indeed, and removing the duſt which ſurrounds the edifice; we may perceive

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the immoveable baſis on which it is raiſed, and thence learn to reſpect their foundation.

Now, without a ſerious application to the ſtudy of man, his natural faculties and their ſucceſſive developement, we ſhall never be able to make theſe neceſſary diſtinctions; or to ſeparate, in the actual ſituation of things, that which is the effect of the divine will, from the improvements attempted by human art. The political and moral reſearches, therefore, to which the examination of the important queſtion before me, leads us, are in every reſpect uſeful; while the hypothetical hiſtory of governments, affords a leſſon equally inſtructive to mankind.

In conſidering what we ſhould have been, if left to ourſelves, we ſhould learn to bleſs that Being, whoſe gracious hand, correcting our inſtitutions, and giving them an immoveable baſis, hath prevented thoſe diſorders which otherwiſe would have ariſen from them, and cauſed our happineſs to proceed from thoſe means, which ſeemed calculated to involve us in miſery.

Quem de deus eſſe
Juſſit, et humanâ quâ parte locatus es in re,
Diſce.

ADVERTISEMENT

Reſpecting the Notes, annexed to the following DISSERTATION.

I Have added ſome annotations to this work, according to my indolent cuſtom of writing by fits and ſtarts. Theſe I have thrown together at the end of the diſſertation; as, in this I have endeavoured to take the ſhorteſt way; and the ſubject of my notes ſometimes rambled too far from that of the text to be read conveniently with it.

Thoſe, who may have the courage to venture on a ſecond peruſal of the diſcourſe, may amuſe themſelves by beating the buſhes, and try to run over the notes. As to others, it is no great matter if they do not read them at all.

QUESTION,

Propoſed by the Academy of DIJON.

What is the Origin of the Inequality among Men, and whether it be authorized by the Law of Nature?

A

DISSERTATION

ON THE

ORIGIN and FOUNDATION

OF THE

Inequality of Mankind.

MAN is the ſubject of the preſent enquiry; from the nature of which, it is evident I am going to addreſs myſelf to thoſe who are worthy of that appellation: for it belongs to men only, to thoſe who are not afraid to honour the truth, to propoſe queſtions of this kind. I ſhall with confidence, therefore, engage in the cauſe of humanity, before the ſages, who

who invite me to it; and shall have no reason to be dissatisfied if I acquit myself in a manner worthy of my subject and of my judges.

I conceive there are two kinds of inequality among the human species; one, which I call natural or physical, because it is established by nature, and consists in a difference of age, health, corporeal strength, and the qualities of the mind or of the soul: and another, which may be called a moral or political inequality; because it depends on a kind of convention, and is established, or at least authorized by the common consent of mankind. This latter consists of the different privileges, which some men enjoy to the prejudice of others; such as that of being more rich, more honoured, more powerful and more privileged to exact obedience.

It were superfluous to ask what is the source of their natural inequality, because that question is answered by the simple definition of the word. Again it would be still more superfluous to enquire, whether there be any essential relation or connection between the two inequalities; for this would be only asking, in other words, whether those who command are necessarily better than those who obey; and if strength of body or of mind, wisdom, or virtue are to be always found in particular individuals, in the same proportion with power or wealth: a question proper enough perhaps to be discussed by slaves in the hearing of their masters, but highly unbecoming reasonable men at liberty, and in search of the truth.

The subject of the present discourse, therefore, is more precisely this. To mark, in the pro-

progreſs of things, that critical moment, in which right ſucceeding to violence, nature became ſubject to law: and to explain by what chain of ſurprizing events the ſtrong ſubmitted to ſerve the weak, and the people to purchaſe imaginary repoſe at the expence of real felicity.

The philoſophers, who have enquired into the foundations of civil ſociety, have, all of them, perceived the neceſſity of recurring to a ſtate of nature; but not one of them have reached it. Some of them have not heſitated to aſcribe to man, in ſuch a ſtate, a notion of juſtice and injuſtice, without troubling themſelves to ſhew that he muſt be poſſeſſed of ſuch a notion, or that it could be of any uſe to him. Others have ſpoken of the natural right of every man to keep what belonged to him, without explaining what they meant by the term *belong*. Others again, having at firſt inveſted the ſtrong with an authority over the weak, proceeded directly to form a government, without regarding the time that muſt have elapſed, before the ſenſe of the words authority and government could have entered into the minds of men. Every one of them, in ſhort, conſtantly dwelling on the ſubjects of wants, avidity, oppreſſion, deſires and pride, have transferred to a ſtate of nature, thoſe ideas which they acquired, and could only acquire, in a ſtate of ſociety; ſo that, altho' they ſpoke only of ſavages, they deſcribed them as if they were civilized. It hath even never entered into the head of moſt of our writers, to entertain a ſuſpicion that a ſtate of nature exiſted; in the mean while it appears evident, from the Holy Scriptures, that the firſt man, having

having received his knowledge and commandments immediately from God, was not himself in such a state; and that, if we give such credit to the writings of Moses as every Christian philosopher ought to do, it must be denied that, even before the deluge, men were found in a pure state of nature; unless, indeed, they fell into it by some very extraordinary circumstance; a paradox very perplexing to defend, and altogether impossible to prove.

Let us begin, therefore, by laying facts aside, as they do not affect the question. The researches we may enter into, in treating this subject, must not be considered as historical truths, but only as mere conditional and systematical reasonings, rather calculated to explain the nature of things, than to ascertain their real origin; just like those hypotheses with which our naturalists daily amuse themselves respecting the formation of the world. Religion commands us to believe that, God himself having taken men out of a state of nature, they are unequal only because it is his will they should be so: but it does not forbid us to form conjectures from the mere natural state of man, and the beings around him, concerning what might have been the state of the human race, if it had been abandoned and left to itself. This then is the question asked me, and that which I propose to discuss in the following dissertation.

As my subject is interesting to mankind in general, I shall endeavour to make use of a style, adapted to all nations; or rather, forgetting the accidents of time and place, to attend only to mankind, to whom I am speaking, I shall suppose myself in the Lyceum of Athens,

Athens, repeating the leſſons of my maſters; having Plato and Xenocrates for my judges, and the whole human race for my audience.

Attend, O man, of whatever country thou art, and whatever be thy opinions. Behold your hiſtory, ſuch as I conceive I have read it, not in books written by your fellow-creatures, who are liars; but in that of nature, who never lies. All that I ſhall tranſcribe from her, will be true; nor will you meet with any thing falſe, unleſs I ſhould involuntarily mix ſomething of my own. The times I am going to ſpeak of, are very remote: alas! how much are you changed from what you once was! It is, if I may ſo call it, the life of your ſpecies which I am going to write, after the qualities which you have received, and which your education and habits have been able to deprave, but could not entirely deſtroy. I am ſenſible, there is an age, at which the individual man would wiſh to ſtop: you are about to enquire for that age, at which you will poſſibly wiſh your whole ſpecies had made a ſtand. Diſcontented with your preſent ſtate, for reaſons which threaten your unfortunate deſcendents with ſtill greater diſcontent, you will wiſh it perhaps in your power to go back; and this ſentiment ought to be a panegyrick on your anceſtors, a ſatire on your contemporaries, and a terror to your poſterity.

PART THE FIRST.

IMportant as it may be, in order to judge rightly of the natural ſtate of man, to take a view of his origin; and to examine him, as it were, in the embryo ſtate of his ſpecies; I ſhall not preſume to trace the ſucceſſive improvements of his organization. I ſhall not ſtay to enquire alſo of the animal ſyſtem, what he might have been in the beginning, in order to become at length what he actually is; whether his long nails were at firſt as Ariſtotle ſuppoſes, only crooked talons; his whole body, like that of bears, covered with hair; or whether he walked upon all fours, (3.) with his looks directed toward the earth, and confined to an horizon of a few paces extant, at once pointing out the nature and limits of his ideas. On this ſubject I could form none but vague and perhaps merely chimerical conjectures. Comparative anatomy hath as yet made too little progreſs; and the obſervations of the naturaliſts are too uncertain, to afford a baſis ſufficiently ſolid for any rational ſyſtem. So that, without having recourſe to the ſupernatural informations given us on this head, or paying any regard to the changes which muſt have taken place both in the external and internal conformation of the human frame, in proportion as mankind applied their limbs to new purpoſes and labours, and was nouriſhed with new ali-

aliments, I ſhall ſuppoſe his conformation to have been at all times what it appears to us at this day; that he always walked on two feet; made uſe of his hands as we do; directed his looks over all nature, and meaſured with his eyes, the vaſt expanſe of Heaven.

To ſtrip this Being, now, thus conſtituted, of all the ſupernatural gifts which he may have received, and of all the artificial faculties which he muſt have by ſlow degrees acquired; to conſider him, in a word, ſuch as he muſt have come from the hands of nature, I behold in him an animal weaker than ſome, and leſs active than others; but, taking all things together, the moſt advantageouſly organized of any. I ſee him ſatisfying his hunger at the firſt oak, and ſlaking his thirſt at the firſt brook, in his way; finding his bed at the foot of the ſame tree, which afforded him a repaſt, and behold all his wants are ſupplied.

While the earth was left to its natural fertility, (4) it was covered with immenſe foreſts, whoſe trees were never mutilated by the axe, but preſented on every ſide both ſuſtenance and ſhelter for every ſpecies of animals. Mankind, diſperſed up and down among the reſt, would of courſe obſerve and imitate their induſtry; thus attaining even the inſtinct of the beaſts, with this advantage, that, as every ſpecies of brutes was confined to one particular inſtinct, man, who perhaps has not any one peculiar to himſelf, would appropriate thoſe of all others, and live upon moſt of thoſe different aliments, which other animals divide among them; (5) and hence would find his ſubſiſtence much eaſier than any other.

Accuſtomed from their infancy to the inclemencies of the weather, and the rigour of the ſeaſons; inured to fatigue, and forced, naked and unarmed, to defend themſelves and their prey from other ferocious animals, or to eſcape them by flight, mankind would acquire a robuſt and almoſt unalterable temperament of body. In the mean while, the children, bringing with them into the world the excellent conſtitution of their parents, and then confirming it by the ſame exerciſes which firſt produced it, would thus acquire all that ſtrength and vigour, of which the human frame is capable. Nature in this caſe treats them exactly as Sparta treated the children of her citizens: thoſe of them who came well formed into the world, ſhe renders ſtrong and robuſt, and deſtroys all the reſt; differing totally in this reſpect from our modern communities; in which the ſtate, by permitting children to become burthenſome to their parents, murders them all without diſtinction even in the mother's womb.

The body of a ſavage man being the only inſtrument he knows how to make uſe of, he employs it to ſeveral purpoſes; of which ours, for want of practice, are incapable: our induſtry depriving us of that force and agility, which neceſſity obliges him to acquire. If he had an axe, would he be able with his naked arm to break ſo large a branch from a tree? If he had a ſling, would he be able to throw a ſtone with ſo great a velocity? If he had a ladder, would he be ſo nimble in climbing a tree? If he had a horſe, would he be himſelf ſo ſwift at the race? Allow civilized man the time to gather all his machines about him, and he will undoubtedly

be an overmatch for the ſavage; but if you would ſee a conteſt ſtill more unequal, ſet them together naked and unarmed, and you will preſently ſee the advantage of having all our forces inſtantly at our diſpoſal; of being always prepared for every event, and in carrying one's ſelf, as it were, perpetually whole and entire about one (6.)

Hobbes pretends that man is naturally intrepid, and is intent only upon attacking, and fighting with other animals. This opinion hath been controverted by a certain illuſtrious philoſopher; Cumberland and Puffendorf alſo affirm that nothing is more timid and fearful than man in a ſtate of nature; that he is always in a tremour, and ready to fly from the leaſt noiſe he hears or motion he perceives. This may poſſibly be true, with reſpect to ſuch objects as he is unacquainted with; and I doubt not of his being terrified by every novelty that preſents itſelf, when he neither knows the phyſical good or evil he ought to expect from it, nor can make a compariſon between his own ſtrength and the dangers he is about to encounter. Theſe circumſtances, however, rarely occur in a ſtate of nature; in which all things proceed in an uniform manner, and the face of the earth is not ſubject to thoſe ſudden and continual changes, which ariſe from the paſſions and caprices of collected bodies. But ſavage man, diſperſed up and down among other animals, and finding himſelf betimes in a ſituation to meaſure his ſtrength with theirs, he ſoon makes a compariſon between them; and, perceiving that he ſurpaſſes them more in addreſs

than they ſurpaſs him in ſtrength, he is taught to be no longer afraid of them. Set a bear, or a wolf, againſt a robuſt, active, and reſolute ſavage, as they all are, armed with ſtones and a good cudgel, and you will ſee the danger to be reciprocally equal. Hence it is to be preſumed that, after a few trials of this nature, wild beaſts, who are not fond of attacking each other, will not be very ready to make an attack on man, whom they find as wild and ferocious as themſelves.

With regard to ſuch animals as have really more ſtrength than man hath addreſs, he is in reſpect to them, in the ſame ſituation with all other weaker animals, who notwithſtanding ſtill find means of ſubſiſtence; except indeed he hath this advantage, that being equally ſwift of foot, and finding an almoſt certain place of refuge in every tree, he is ever at liberty to take or leave it, and thus to fight or fly, as he judges it moſt convenient.

Add to this, it does not appear that any animal naturally makes war on man, except in caſes of ſelf defence or exceſſive hunger; or betrays any of thoſe violent antipathies, which ſeem to indicate that one ſpecies is intended by nature, for the food of others.

But man hath other enemies more formidable; againſt which he is not provided with the like means of defence: theſe are natural infirmities, infancy, ſeneſcence, and maladies of every kind; melancholy proofs of our imbecillity; of which the two former are common to all animals, and the laſt belongs chiefly to man in a ſtate of ſociety.

With

With regard to infancy, it is obſervable that the mother carrying her child always with her, can nurſe it with much greater eaſe, than the females of many other animals, who are forced to be perpetually going backwards and forwards, one way to find ſubſiſtence, and another to ſuckle or feed their young. It is true that if the woman happens in ſuch a caſe to periſh, the infant is in danger of periſhing with her; but this riſk is common to many other ſpecies of animals, whoſe young require a long time to be able to provide for themſelves. And if our infancy be longer than theirs, our lives are likewiſe longer in proportion; ſo that all things are in this reſpect pretty equal; (7) though there are other particulars to be conſidered regarding the duration of the firſt period of life, and of the multiplication of the ſpecies, which do not affect the preſent ſubject. (8)

In old age, men are leſs active and perſpire little; the want of food therefore diminiſhes with their abilities to provide it. As in a ſavage ſtate, alſo, they would be exempted from the gout and rheumatiſm, whilſt old age is, of all ills, that which human aſſiſtance is leaſt capable to alleviate, they would, in ſuch a ſtate, go off the ſtage, without others perceiving that they ceaſed to exiſt, and almoſt without perceiving it themſelves.

With reſpect to ſickneſs, I ſhall not repeat the vain and falſe declamations, of moſt people in health, againſt phyſick; but I ſhall aſk if any ſolid obſervations have been made, from which it may be juſtly concluded that, the duration of man's life, taken at a medium, is ſhorter in thoſe countries where the art of me-

dicine is moſt neglected, than in thoſe where it is moſt cultivated? How is it poſſible, indeed, that this ſhould be the caſe, if we bring on ourſelves more diſeaſes than phyſick can furniſh us with remedies?

The great difference in the manner of living of the ſeveral claſſes of mankind, the extreme idleneſs of ſome, and exceſſive labour of others, the facility of exciting and gratifying our ſenſual appetites, the too exquiſite aliments of the wealthy which overheat and fill them with indigeſtions; and, on the other hand, the unwholeſome food of the poor, of which, bad as it is, they are often in want, which induces them, when opportunity offers, to eat voraciouſly and overcharge their ſtomachs; all theſe together with our watchings, and exceſſes of every kind, immoderate ſallies of paſſion, fatigues, waſte of ſpirits, the innumerable pains and anxieties inſeparable from every condition of life, and by which the mind of man is inceſſantly tormented; theſe, I ſay, are too fatal proofs, that the greater part of our ills are of our own making, and that we might have avoided them all by adhering to that ſimple, uniform and ſolitary manner of life which nature originally preſcribed. Had ſhe deſtined man to be healthy, I could almoſt venture to declare that a ſtate of reflection is a ſtate contrary to nature, and that a thinking man is a depraved animal. When we think on the good conſtitution of the ſavages, at leaſt of thoſe whom we have not ruined by our ſpirituous liquors; and reflect that they are troubled with hardly any diſorders, but ſuch as are cauſed by wounds or old age; we muſt

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be in a manner convinced that the hiſtory of human diſeaſes muſt be confined to that of civil ſociety.

Such, at leaſt, was the opinion of Plato; who inferred from ſome certain remedies preſcribed, or approved, by Podalyrus and Machaon at the ſiege of Troy, that ſeveral maladies which theſe remedies gave riſe to in his time, were not then known to mankind.

Man, being ſubject therefore to ſo few cauſes of ſickneſs in a ſtate of nature, can have no need of phyſick, and ſtill leſs of phyſicians: neither is he in this reſpect worſe off than other animals; and yet it is eaſy to know of hunters, whether they meet with many infirm animals in the courſe of the chaſe. It is certain they frequently meet with ſuch as carry the marks of having been conſiderably wounded, with many that have had their bones broken, or their limbs torn off; whoſe wounds have yet healed up, and whoſe bones have knit together, without any other chirurgical aſſiſtance than that afforded by the hand of time, or any other regimen than that of their ordinary courſe of life. At the ſame time their cures ſeem not to have been leſs perfect, for want of their having been tortured by inciſions, poiſoned with drugs, or waſted by abſtinence. In fine, however uſeful phyſick, properly adminiſtered, may be to us, it is certain that, if the ſavage when he is ſick and deſtitute, has nothing to hope for but from nature, he has, on the other hand, nothing to fear but from his diſeaſe; which renders his ſituation frequently preferable to ours.

We ſhould beware, therefore, of confounding ſavage man, with the men we have daily before our eyes. Nature treats all the animals abandoned to her care, with a predilection that ſeems to ſhew how very jealous ſhe is of that prerogative. The horſe, the cat, the bull, and even the aſs itſelf, are generally of an higher ſtature, are always more robuſt, have more vigour, ſtrength and courage, when they run wild in the foreſts than when bred in the ſtall. By becoming domeſticks, they loſe half their advantages; while it ſeems as if all our attention to feed them well, and treat them kindly, ſerved only to deprave their ſpecies. It is thus with man: in proportion as he becomes ſocial and obſequious to others, he becomes himſelf weak, timid and ſervile; his effeminate way of life totally enervating both his ſtrength and his courage. To this it may be added, that there is ſtill a greater difference between ſavage and civilized man, than between wild and tame beaſts: for men and brutes having been treated alike by nature, the ſeveral conveniences in which men indulge themſelves ſtill more than they do their beaſts, occaſion them of courſe to be more palpably degenerate.

It is not therefore ſo great a misfortune to theſe primitive men, nor ſo great an obſtacle to their preſervation, that they go naked, are deſtitute of habitations and of all thoſe ſuperfluities which we miſtake for neceſſaries. If their ſkins are not covered with hair; they have no need of ſuch covering in warm climates; and in the cold they preſently learn to keep themſelves

themſelves warm with the ſkins of other animals. If they have but two legs to run with, they have two arms to defend themſelves with, and provide their ſuſtenance. Their children are ſlowly and with difficulty taught to walk; but their mothers are able to carry them with eaſe; an advantage which other animals are not poſſeſſed of; as the mother, if purſued, is either forced to abandon her young, or to riſk her own ſafety by keeping pace with them.

Unleſs, in ſhort, we ſuppoſe a ſingular and fortuitous concurrence of circumſtances, of which I ſhall ſpeak hereafter, and which it is probable never exiſted, it is plain in every ſtate of the caſe, that the man who firſt made himſelf clothes, and built himſelf a hut, furniſhed himſelf with things little neceſſary; for he had till then done without them, and wherefore ſhould he not have been able to ſupport in manhood the ſame kind of life, in which he had ſpent his infancy.

Solitary, indolent, and perpetually accompanied by danger, the ſavage muſt of courſe be fond of ſleep; his ſleep alſo muſt be light, like that of other animals, who think but little, and may be ſaid to ſlumber all the time they do not think. Self-preſervation being his chief and almoſt only concern, he muſt exerciſe thoſe faculties moſt, which are moſt ſerviceable to attack or defence, either in order to overcome his prey, or to prevent his becoming the prey of other animals.

On the other hand, thoſe organs which are to be improved only by ſenſibility and ſenſuality, will remain in a groſs and imperfect ſtate, incompatible with every ſpecies of delicacy;

ſo that, his ſenſes being divided on this head, his touch and taſte will be extremely courſe and dull: while his ſight, his hearing and ſmell will be exceſſively fine and ſubtile. Such is the animal ſtate in general, and ſuch, according to the relations of travellers, is that of moſt ſavage nations. It is therefore no matter of ſurprize that the Hottentots of the Cape of Good Hope diſtinguiſh ſhips at ſea, with the naked eye, at as great a diſtance as the Dutch can do with their teleſcopes; or that the ſavages of America ſhould trace the Spaniards, by their ſmell, as well as the beſt dogs might have done; or that none of theſe barbarous people feel pain in going naked, or that they uſe large quantities of piemento with their food, and drink the ſtrongeſt European liquors like water.

Hitherto I have conſidered man merely in his phyſical capacity; let us now take a view of him in a metaphyſical and moral light.

I ſee nothing in any animal but an ingenious machine, to which nature hath given ſenſes to wind itſelf up, and to guard itſelf, to a certain degree, againſt any thing that might tend to diſorder or deſtroy it. I perceive exactly the ſame things in the human machine, with this difference, that in the operations of the brute, nature is the ſole agent; whereas man hath ſome ſhare in his, by virtue of his qualities as a free agent. The one chuſes and refuſes from inſtinct, the other from an act of free-will: hence the brute cannot deviate from the rules preſcribed to it, even when it would be advantageous for him to do it; and, on the contrary, man frequently deviates from ſuch rules, to his own prejudice. Thus a pigeon muſt be ſtarved

to

to death, by the ſide of a diſh of the fineſt fleſh-meat, and a cat by a heap of fruit or grain; tho' it is certain both might find nouriſhment in the food which they thus reject with diſdain, were they to make trial of it. Hence it is that mankind grown diſſolute run into thoſe exceſſes, bring on fevers and death; becauſe the imagination depraves the ſenſes, and the will continues to ſpeak when nature is ſilent.

Every animal hath ideas, for every animal hath ſenſes; he combines thoſe ideas alſo to a certain degree; and it is only in the difference of the degree, that man differs, in this reſpect, from the brute: ſome philoſophers indeed have advanced, that there is a greater difference between ſome men and others, than there is between ſome men and beaſts. It is not, therefore, ſo much the faculty of underſtanding that conſtitutes the ſpecific difference between the man and the brute, as it is his quality of free-agency. Nature lays her commands indiſcriminately on all animals, and the brute obeys her voice. Man is ſenſible of the ſame impulſe; but at the ſame time alſo is ſenſible that he is at liberty to acquieſce or reſiſt: and it is particularly in his conſciouſneſs of this liberty, that the ſpirituality of his ſoul is diſplayed. For phyſics may explain, in ſome meaſure, the mechaniſm of the ſenſes and the formation of ideas; but in the power of willing or rather of chuſing, and in the ſenſe of this power, nothing is to be found but an agency purely ſpiritual, and inexplicable by the laws of mechaniſm.

Suppoſing, however, that the difficulties, attending all theſe queſtions, ſhould ſtill leave

room for disputing this difference between men and brutes, there is another very specific quality which distinguishes them, and which will admit of no disputation; this is the faculty of improvement; a faculty which, by the help of circumstances, gradually unfolds all the rest, and is inherent not only in the species but the individual: whereas a brute is, at the end of a few months, all he ever will be during the rest of his life; and his species, at the end of a thousand years, are exactly what it was the first year of that thousand. Wherefore is man alone subject to imbecillity and dotage? Is it not because he returns, in this, to his primitive state; and that, while the brute, which has acquired nothing and has therefore nothing to lose, still retains the force of instinct, man, who loses, by age or accident, the acquisitions he had made by his *perfectibility*, falls by this means lower than even the brutes themselves?

It would be a melancholy circumstance, were we forced to admit, that this distinguishing and almost boundless faculty, is the source of all human misfortunes; that this it is which, in time, draws man out of his original state, in which his days would insensibly pass away in peace and innocence: that it is this faculty, which successively producing in different ages his discoveries and his errors, and his vices and his virtues, renders him at length both a tyrant over himself and over nature. (9) It would be as shocking also to be obliged to call the man a beneficent being, who first suggested to the Oroonoko Indians the use of the boards they apply to the temples of their children, and

which

which ſecure to them ſome part at leaſt of their imbecillity and original happineſs.

Savage man, left by nature to the direction of inſtinct, or rather indemnified for that which perhaps he wants, by faculties, capable at firſt of ſupplying its place, and afterwards of raiſing him much above it, muſt of courſe begin with functions merely animal (10): thus to ſee and to feel muſt be the exertions of his firſt ſtate, and this would be common alike to him and other animals. To will, and not to will, to deſire and to fear, muſt be the firſt, and almoſt the only operations of his ſoul, till new circumſtances ſhould ſucceſſively occaſion new developements of its faculties.

Whatever the moraliſts pretend, the human underſtanding is greatly indebted to the paſſions; which, it is univerſally allowed, are much indebted alſo to the underſtanding. It is by the activity of the paſſions that our judgment is improved: for we deſire knowledge only becauſe we covet enjoyment; it being impoſſible to conceive why a perſon who hath neither fears nor deſires ſhould give himſelf the trouble to reaſon. The paſſions, again, in their turn take their riſe from our wants; as their progreſs is owing to that of our knowledge; for we cannot deſire or fear any thing, but from the ideas we have of it, or from the ſimple impulſe of nature. Now ſavage man, being deſtitute of every ſpecies of knowledge, can have no paſſions but thoſe of the latter kind: his deſires never extend beyond his phyſical neceſſities. (11) The only good things in the univerſe that he covets are food, a female, and ſleep: the only evils that he fears are pain and

and hunger. I ſay pain, and not death: for no animal can ever know what it is to die; the knowledge of death and its terrours being one of the firſt acquiſitions made by man when he departs from an animal ſtate.

It would be eaſy, were it neceſſary, to ſupport this opinion by facts, and to ſhow that, in all the nations of the world, the progreſs of the underſtanding hath been exactly proportionate to the neceſſities which the people have been expoſed to by nature, or ſubjected to by adventitious circumſtances, and of conſequence to the paſſions that induced them to provide againſt thoſe neceſſities. I might exhibit the arts, riſing up in Egypt and expanding themſelves with the inundation of the Nile. I might purſue them in their progreſs into Greece; where they took root afreſh, grew up and towered with their lofty heads into the ſkies, amidſt the rocks and ſands of Attica; without being able to germinate in the fertile ſoil of the banks of Eurotas: I might obſerve that in general, the people of the North are more induſtrious than thoſe of the South; becauſe they could not ſo well ſubſiſt without induſtry; as if nature was reſolved to reduce every thing to an equality, by giving that fertility to the genius of a people which ſhe had refuſed to their ſoil. But who does not ſee, without recurring to the uncertain teſtimony of hiſtory, that every thing in nature ſeems to remove from uncivilized man, both the temptation and means of changing his condition? His imagination deſcribes nothing to excite wiſhes, which his heart doth not ſuggeſt. His wants are ſo moderate that they are readily

ſupplied with what he finds at hand, and he is ſo far from having that knowledge, which is requiſite to make him covet more, that he is altogether deſtitute both of foreſight and curioſity.

The face of nature becomes indifferent to him as it grows familiar. He obſerves nothing in it but the ſame order, the ſame revolution: he has not underſtanding enough to be ſurprized at the greateſt miracles; nor is it in his vacant mind we are to look for that philoſophy, which man ſtands in need of, to know how to obſerve once, what he ſees every day. His ſoul, which is totally undiſturbed, indulges itſelf ſolely in the conſciouſneſs of its preſent exiſtence, without any idea of futurity, even of its neareſt period; while his projects, equally limited with his views, hardly reach to the cloſe of the day. Such, even at preſent, is the want of foreſight in the native Carribean, who will improvidently ſell you his cotton-bed in the morning, and come crying in the evening to buy it again, not having foreſeen he ſhould want it at night.

The more we reflect on this ſubject, the greater appears the diſtance between mere ſenſation and the moſt ſimple ſcience: it is impoſſible indeed to conceive how man, by his own powers alone, without the aid of communication, and the ſpur of neceſſity, could have got over ſo great an interval. It is not improbable that many ages elapſed, before mankind beheld any other fire than that of the heavens. What a multiplicity of accidents muſt have concurred, to bring them acquainted with the moſt common uſes of that element? How often muſt they

they not have ſuffered it to expire or be extinguiſhed, without knowing the art or means of reproducing it? and how often may not ſuch ſecrets have died with the diſcoverer?

What ſhall we ſay, in particular, of agriculture; an art which requires ſo much labour and foreſight; an art ſo dependent on many others, that it is plain, it could not be practiſed but in a ſociety at leaſt begun; an art which does not ſerve ſo much to draw the means of ſubſiſtence from the earth, for theſe the earth would produce voluntarily, but to compel the earth to produce what is moſt agreeable to our taſte? But let us ſuppoſe that mankind, in a ſtate of nature, had multiplied ſo faſt, that the ſpontaneous produce of the earth was no longer ſufficient for their ſupport; a ſuppoſition, by the way, which would prove that ſuch a kind of life muſt be very advantageous to the human race; let us ſuppoſe that, without forges or ſmitheries, the inſtruments of huſbandry had dropt from the ſkies into the hands of ſavages; that they had overcome their natural averſion to continual labour; that they had acquired conſiderable foreſight of their wants; that they had divined the methods of cultivating the earth, of ſowing and planting; that they had diſcovered the arts of grinding corn, and of converting the juice of the grape by fermentation into wine; all of them ſuch things as muſt have been taught them by the gods, ſince it is not to be conceived how they could diſcover them of themſelves: yet after all this, what individual among them would be ſo abſurd as to take the trouble of cultivating a field, which might be ſtript of its crop by the

firſt comer, whether man or beaſt, that might take a liking to it; and how ſhould each of them reſolve to paſs his life in laborious fatigue, the reward of which he is by ſo much the more certain of not receiving, as he is ſure of wanting it? In a word, how could ſuch a ſituation induce men to cultivate the earth, till it was regularly parcelled out and divided among them; that is to ſay, till the ſtate of nature in which they ſubſiſted was annihilated.

Were we to ſuppoſe uncivilized man as well verſed in the art of thinking, as philoſophers pretend; ſhould we even follow their example, and ſuppoſe him to be a very philoſopher himſelf, capable of inveſtigating the ſublimeſt truths, and of forming by abſtract reaſonings, maxims of reaſon and juſtice, deduced from a love of order in general, or the known will of his Creator; in a word, though we were to ſuppoſe his underſtanding as intelligent and enlightened, as it muſt, and in fact is found to be, dull and ſtupid, what advantage would accrue to the ſpecies, from all theſe metaphyſical diſcoveries; which could not be communicated from one to another, but muſt end with the individual that might make them? What progreſs could be made by mankind, while diſperſed up and down among other animals? and how far could men reciprocally improve, or mutually enlighten each other, when, having no fixed habitation, nor any need of each other's aſſiſtance, the ſame perſons hardly met twice in their lives, and perhaps then, without knowing or ſpeaking together.

Let it be conſidered how many ideas we owe to the uſe and practice of ſpeech; how far

grammar

grammar exercises the understanding and facilitates its operations. Let us reflect on the inconceivable pains and infinite space of time, bestowed on the first invention of languages. To these reflections join the preceeding, and then judge how many millions of ages must elapse in the successive developement of those intellectual operations of which the human mind is capable.

I shall here take the liberty for a moment, to consider the embarrassments attending the original formation of languages: on which subject I might content myself with a simple repetition of what has been advanced by the Abbe Condillac; as it serves fully to confirm my system, and perhaps even first suggested it. But it is plain, by the manner in which this philosopher resolves the difficulties he himself raises, concerning the origin of arbitrary signs, that he conceives, what I doubt to have been true, viz. that a kind of society must have subsisted among the first inventors of languages. While I refer, however, to his observations on this head, I think it expedient for me to give my own, in order to exhibit the same difficulties in a light adapted to my subject. The first which presents itself is, to conceive how language originally became necessary; for as there was no commerce or communication kept up among men, nor the least occasion for any, we can neither conceive the necessity of this invention, nor yet the possibility of it, if it was not some how indispensible. I might affirm, with many others, that languages took their rise in the domestic intercourse that must necessarily subsist between parents and their children.

children. But this expedient would not obviate the difficulty, and would beſides be making the ſame blunder as thoſe, who always make uſe of ideas collected in a ſtate of ſociety, in their reaſonings on a ſtate of nature. Thus they conſtantly conſider families as living together under one roof, and the individuals of each obſerving among themſelves as intimate and permanent an union, as that which exiſts in a ſtate of civil ſociety, where their common intereſts variouſly conſpire to unite them: whereas in the primitive ſtate, of which we are ſpeaking, men had neither houſes, cabbins, nor any kind of property whatever; ſo that every one took up his lodging where he could find it; ſeldom reſting above a ſingle night in a place; the ſexes united without any premeditated deſign, as accident, opportunity or inclination brought them together, nor had they any great need of language to communicate their deſigns to each other; but, having put them in execution, they parted with the ſame indifference they met. The mother gave ſuck to her children at firſt for her own ſake; and afterwards out of an affection acquired by habit, as cuſtom had made them dear to her: but theſe, as ſoon as they had gained ſufficient ſtrength to go in ſearch of their own food, forſook her of their own accord; and, as they had hardly any other method of not loſing each other than that of remaining continually in ſight, they preſently forgot each other, and were totally ſtrangers when they happened to meet again. It is farther to be obſerved that the child, having all his wants to explain, and of courſe more to ſay to his mother than the mother could

could have to ſay to him, the taſk of invention muſt be upon him, and the language he ſhould make uſe of, his own device; ſo that hence the number of languages would be equal to that of the individuals ſpeaking them, and their variety would be increaſed by their vagabond and roving life; which would not allow of time enough for any to arrive at a conſiſtency of idiom. For, to pretend that the mother would have dictated to her child the words, neceſſary for him to employ, in aſking her for this thing or the other, is to begin explaining in what manner languages already formed are taught, but does by no means explain in what manner languages were originally formed.

We will ſuppoſe, however, that this firſt difficulty is obviated. Let us juſt for a moment then conſider ourſelves arrived on this ſide of that vaſt ſpace, which muſt have divided a pure ſtate of nature from that in which languages were become neceſſary; and after admitting ſuch a neceſſity, let us enquire how languages could at firſt be eſtabliſhed. Here we have a new difficulty to grapple with, ſtill more ſtubborn than the preceeding; for if mankind ſtood in need of ſpeech, in order to learn to think, they muſt have ſtood in much greater need of the art of thinking, to be able to invent that of ſpeaking. And tho' we might poſſibly form ſome conception how the articulate ſounds of the voice came to be taken for the conventional interpreters of our ideas, it would ſtill remain for us to enquire what could have been the interpreters of this very convention with regard to thoſe ideas, which, not anſwering to any ſenſible objects, could not be indicated

indicated either by geſture or voice; in ſo much that we can hardly form any tolerable conjectures about the riſe of this art of communicating our thoughts and eſtabliſhing a correſpondence between intellectual minds: an art ſo ſublime, that altho' ſo far diſtant from its origin, philoſophers ſtill behold it at ſuch an immeaſurable diſtance from the point of its perfection, that I never found one of them raſh enough to affirm it would ever arrive at it, even tho' the revolutions produced by time ſhould be ſuſpended in its favour, tho' the prepoſſeſſions of our academies ſhould be baniſhed or condemned to ſilence, and even tho' theſe learned ſocieties ſhould devote their application for whole ages to the inveſtigation of this intricate ſubject.

The firſt language of mankind, the moſt univerſal and pathetic of all others, in a word the only language man ſtood in need of, before he had occaſion to exert his eloquence to perſuade aſſembled multitudes, was the ſimple cries of nature. But as theſe were never extorted unleſs from the force of inſtinct on urgent occaſions, to demand aſſiſtance in caſe of danger, or relief in caſe of ſuffering, it could be of little utility in the ordinary occurrences of life, in which moderate ſentiments prevail. When the ideas of men began to expand and multiply, and a cloſer perſonal communication took place among them, they ſtrove to invent more numerous ſigns and to deſire a more copious language. The inflections of the voice were then multiplied, and geſtures were ſuperadded, which latter are in their own nature more expreſſive, and leſs ſubject to

prior

prior convention. Visible and moveable objects were therefore expressed by gestures, and audible ones by imitative sounds. But, as hardly any thing can be indicated by gestures, except objects actually present or visible actions easily described; as they are not of universal use from the interposition of darkness or any opake medium, and as besides they rather require than engage our attention; mankind bethought themselves at length of substituting the articulate sounds of the voice; which, without bearing the same relation to any particular ideas, are better calculated to express them all, in quality of conventional or instituted signs. Now this institution of arbitrary sound, it is plain, could only have been made by common consent, and must have been effected in a manner not very easily put in practice by men, whose gross organs had not been accustomed to such exercise. Such an institution is also still the more difficult to be conceived, since the very motives to such a common agreement must have been by some means expressed, and therefore speech seems even to have been necessary to establish the use of it. It is reasonable to suppose that the words, first made use of by mankind, had a much more extensive signification in their minds, than those made use of in languages already formed; and that ignorant as they were of the division of discourse into its constituent parts, they at first gave to every single word the sense of a whole proposition. When they afterwards began to perceive the difference between the subject and the attribute, and between the noun and the verb; a distinction which

which it required no common effort of genius to make, the ſubſtantives were at firſt only ſo many proper names; the infinitive was the only tenſe of the verbs; and with regard to adjectives the very idea of them muſt have been with great difficulty developed; becauſe every adjective is expreſſive of an abſtract idea, and to form abſtract ideas is a painful and not very natural operation.

Every object at firſt received a peculiar name without regard to genus or ſpecies; circumſtances which theſe primitive inſtitutors were little qualified to diſtinguiſh; every individual preſenting itſelf to their minds in a ſtate detached from every other, as it ſeems in the picture of nature. If they called one oak A, another oak was called B; ſo that in proportion as their knowledge of things was confined, their dictionary muſt have been copious. The embarraſſment, attending the uſe of ſuch a vocabulary, could not be eaſily removed; for to arrange the ſeveral beings under their common and generical denominations, it became neceſſary to be acquainted with their diſtinguiſhing properties: it required men to be poſſeſſed of many more obſervations and definitions, that is to ſay, of a greater ſhare of natural hiſtory and metaphyſicks than fell to the lot of thoſe primitive ages.

Add to this, that general ideas cannot be ſuggeſted to the mind without the aſſiſtance of words, nor can the underſtanding lay hold of them but by means of verbal propoſitions. This is one of the reaſons why mere animals cannot form ſuch ideas, nor ever acquire that

capacity

capacity for improvement which depends on it. When a monkey, or a ſquirrel, goes from one nut to another, are we to conceive that he entertains any general idea of that kind of fruit, and that he compares its archetype with each of the individual nuts? Aſſuredly he does not; but the ſight of one of theſe nuts recalls to his memory the ſenſations which he received from the other, and his eyes being modified after a certain manner, give information to the palate of that modification it is going to receive. Every general idea is purely intellectual; if the imagination meddles with it ever ſo little, the idea becomes immediately particular. You may endeavour to trace in your mind the idea of a tree in general, but you will never be able to effect it. It will, in ſpite of all you can do, ſeem great or little, bare or leafy, of a light or a dark green; and were you capable of ſeeing nothing in it but what is common to all trees, the image would no longer reſemble any tree at all.

Thus beings purely abſtracted are perceiveable in the ſame manner, or are only conceiveable by the help of language. It is only the definition of a triangle that can give you a true idea of it: the moment a triangle is formed in the imagination, it is immediately ſome particular triangle, and one cannot avoid deſcribing it by palpable lines and a coloured area. We muſt make uſe of propoſitions, therefore, and of language in order to form general ideas. For no ſooner doth the imagination ceaſe to operate, than the underſtanding proceeds only by the aſſiſtance of words. If therefore the firſt inventors of ſpeech could give names only

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to thoſe ideas, which they poſſeſſed, it follows that the primitive noun-ſubſtantives could be nothing more than proper names.

But when our new Grammarians, by means which I have no conception of, began to extend their ideas and generalize their terms, the ignorance of the inventors muſt have confined this method to very narrow limits; and, as they had at firſt gone too far in multiplying the names of individuals, for want of being acquainted with their genus and ſpecies, they made afterwards too few of theſe diſtinctions, for want of having conſidered beings in all their ſpecific differences. It required indeed more knowledge and experience than they could have acquired, and more pains than they would have beſtowed on the inveſtigation, to have carried theſe diſtinctions to their proper length. Now, if even at this time, we are daily diſcovering new ſpecies, which have before eſcaped obſervation, let us reflect how many of them muſt have eſcaped the obſervation of men, who judged of things merely from their firſt appearance! It is ſuperfluous to add that, as to the primitive claſſes and the moſt general notions, theſe muſt neceſſarily have eſcaped their notice alſo: how, for inſtance, could they have underſtood or thought of the words matter, ſpirit, ſubſtance, mode, figure, motion, when even our philoſophers, who have ſo long been conſtantly making uſe of them, can themſelves hardly underſtand them; and, as the ideas attached to them are purely metaphyſical, there are no models of any of them to be found in nature?

But I ſtop at what hath been already ſaid, and beſeech my judges to ſuſpend their attention a while, to conſider, with regard to the invention of phyſical ſubſtantives, which by the way is the eaſieſt part of language to invent, that we have ſtill a great way to go, before we ſhall arrive at a perfect form of ſpeech; capable of expreſſing all the ſentiments of the human mind, of ſuſtaining itſelf unvaried, and of anſwering the purpoſes of publick elocution. I beg of them to conſider how much time muſt have elapſed, and how much knowledge was requiſite to find out numbers, (14) terms of abſtraction, the aoriſts and all the tenſes of verbs, the particles, ſyntax, the method of connecting propoſitions, laying down ſyllogiſms, and of forming all the logick of diſcourſe.

As to myſelf, I am ſo deterred by the increaſing difficulties which preſent themſelves, and ſo well convinced of the almoſt demonſtrable impoſſibility that languages ſhould owe their riſe and eſtabliſhment to mere human means, that I leave, to any one who will undertake it, the diſcuſſion of this difficult problem. "Which was moſt neceſſary, the eſtabliſhment of ſociety to the invention of language, or the invention of language to the eſtabliſhment of ſociety?" But be the origin of language and that of ſociety as they may, it may be at leaſt inferred, from the little care which nature hath taken to aſſemble mankind by mutual wants, and to facilitate the uſe of ſpeech, that ſhe has contributed few preparatives to their ſociability, and has lent as little aſſiſtance to the pains they have taken in the formation

of

of ſocieties. It is impoſſible in fact to conceive why, in a ſtate of nature, one man ſhould ſtand more in need of the aſſiſtance of another, than a monkey or a wolf of the aſſiſtance of another animal of the ſame kind: or, granting that he did, what motives ſhould induce that other to aſſiſt him; or, even then, by what means he, who required aſſiſtance, and he of whom it was required, could agree about the conditions. I know, it is inceſſantly repeated, that man would in ſuch a ſtate have been a moſt miſerable creature; and indeed, if it be true, as I think I have proved, that he muſt have lived many ages, without having either a deſire or opportunity of emerging from ſuch a ſtate, this circumſtance would only ſerve as the grounds of an accuſation againſt nature, and not againſt the Being which ſhe had thus unhappily conſtituted. But if I rightly comprehend the uſe of the term *miſerable*, it is a word which either has no meaning at all, or ſignifies only a painful privation of ſomething, or a ſtate of ſuffering either in body or ſoul. Now I ſhould be glad to have explained to me, what kind of miſery a free agent, whoſe heart is at eaſe and whoſe body is in health, can poſſibly ſuffer. I would aſk alſo, which is moſt likely, a ſocial or a natural life, to become inſupportable to the perſons who enjoy it? Look but around you, and you will hardly find an human creature in civil ſociety, who does not lament his exiſtence. We ſee many deprive themſelves of as much of it as is in their power, while neither laws human or divine are capable of entirely putting a ſtop to the diſorder. I aſk, if it was ever known that a ſavage took

it into his head, when at liberty, to complain of life or to make away with himself? Let us therefore judge, with less pride and vanity, on which side is found actual misery. On the contrary, nothing could be more unhappy than savage man, dazzled by flashes of science, tormented by his passions, and reasoning about a state different from his own. It appears that Providence most wisely determined that the faculties, which he virtually possessed, should not develop themselves but in proportion as occasions offered to exercise them, in order that they might not be superfluous or perplexing to him, by prematurely appearing, nor slow and useless when he might have occasion for them. In instinct alone, he possessed every thing requisite for him to live in a state of nature; and with an improved understanding he has but just enough to support life in a state of society.

It appears, at first view, that men in a state of nature, having no kind of moral relations, or determinate obligations, subsisting between them, they could not be either good or bad, virtuous or vicious; unless we take the terms vice and virtue in a physical sense, and call those qualities vices which may prove injurious to the preservation of the individual, and those qualities virtues which contribute to that self-preservation; in which case, he must of course be accounted most virtuous, who should give the least check to the impulses of nature. But without deviating from the ordinary sense of the words, it will be proper to suspend the judgment we might otherwise be led to form of such a state, and be on our guard against the force of prejudice, till we have weighed the

matter

matter in the ſcale of impartiality, and ſee whether the virtues or vices preponderate in civil ſociety; till we have examined, whether the progreſs of the ſciences is a ſufficient indemnification for the miſchiefs men do each other, in proportion as they are better informed of the benefits they ought to do; or whether they would not be, on the whole, in a much happier condition if they had nothing to fear or to hope from any one, than as they are, ſubjected to an univerſal dependence, and obliged to receive every thing from thoſe who engage to give them nothing.

Let us not by any means conclude, with Hobbes, that becauſe man hath no idea of goodneſs, he muſt be naturally wicked; that he is vicious becauſe he does not know what is virtue; that he always refuſes to do his fellow-creatures thoſe ſervices which he thinks they have no right to demand; or that by virtue of the right he claims in every thing he wants, he fooliſhly imagines himſelf the ſole proprietor of the whole univerſe. Hobbes had ſeen clearly the defects of all the modern definitions of natural right: but the conſequences which he deduces from his own, ſhew that he underſtands it in a ſenſe equally falſe and exceptionable. In reaſoning upon the principles which this author hath laid down, he ought to have ſaid, "the ſtate of nature, being that in which the care of our own preſervation is the leaſt prejudicial to that of others, was conſequently the beſt calculated for peace, and the moſt agreeable to mankind." But he advances the direct contrary, in conſequence of having improperly admitted into the care of ſavage man's ſelf-preſervation, the gra-

tification of a variety of paſſions, which owe their riſe to ſociety, and which have rendered laws neceſſary. A bad man, ſays he, is a robuſt child. But it remains to be proved whether man in a ſtate of nature be this robuſt child: and, though we ſhould grant him that he is, what would he infer from it? Why truly, that if this man, when robuſt and ſtrong, were dependent on others as he is when feeble, there is no extravagance he would not be guilty of; that he would beat his mother when ſhe was too ſlow in giving him the breaſt; that he would bite and tear his younger brothers, and even ſtrangle them, when they ſhould be troubleſome to him. But theſe ſuppoſitions are in themſelves contradictory; to be in a ſtate of nature ſtrong and at the ſame time dependent. Man is feeble when he is dependent, and is his own maſter before he comes to his full ſtrength. Hobbes did not reflect that the ſame cauſe, which prevents a ſavage from making uſe of his reaſon, as our civilians pretend, prevents him alſo from abuſing his natural faculties; as Hobbes himſelf allows: ſo that it may be juſtly ſaid, the ſavages are not bad merely becauſe they are ignorant of what is good: for it is neither the improvement of the underſtanding nor the reſtraint of law, that hinder them from doing ill; but the calmneſs of their paſſions, and their ignorance of vice: *tanto plus in illis proficit vitiorum ignorantia, quam in his cognitio virtutis.* There is another principle beſides, which hath eſcaped the ſagacity of Hobbes; and which, being beſtowed on mankind, to moderate, on certain occaſions, the impetuoſity of ſelf-love, or the deſire of ſelf-preſervation

previous

previous to the birth of that paſſion, (*15) tempers the ardour with which he purſues his own welfare, by an innate repugnance to behold the ſufferings of a fellow-creature. I don't think I have any contradiction to fear, in allowing man to be poſſeſſed of the only natural virtue, which could not be denied him by the moſt violent declaimer againſt human virtues. I mean that of compaſſion; a diſpoſition ſuitable to creatures ſo weak, and ſubject to ſo many evils as we certainly are: a virtue by ſo much the more univerſal and uſeful to mankind, as it takes place of all manner of reflection; and at the ſame time ſo natural, that the very brutes themſelves give ſometimes evident proofs of it. Not to mention the tenderneſs of mothers for their offſpring; and of the perils they will themſelves encounter to ſave their young from danger: it is well known that horſes ſhew a reluctance to trample on living bodies; that one animal never paſſes by the dead carcaſs of another of the ſame ſpecies without being ſenſibly affected: nay, there are even ſome who give their fellow-brutes a kind of burial; while the mournful lowings of the cattle when they enter the ſlaughter-houſe, ſufficiently publiſh the impreſſions made on them by the horrid ſpectacle with which they are ſtruck. We find, with pleaſure, the author of the Fable of the Bees obliged to own that man is a compaſſionate and ſenſible being; and to lay aſide his phlegm and ſubtlety of ſtile, in the example he gives us, to preſent us with the pathetic deſcription of a man who, from a place of confinement, is compelled to behold a wild beaſt tear a child from the arms of its mother, grinding its ten-

der limbs with its murdering teeth, and dragging out its palpitating entrails with its claws. What horrid agitations must not the eye-witness of so shocking a scene experience, although not personally concerned! What anxiety must he not suffer at not being able to give any assistance to the fainting mother and expiring infant!

Such is the pure emotion of nature prior to all kinds of reflection! Such the force of natural compassion, which the greatest depravity of manners hath as yet hardly been able to destroy! for we daily find at our theatrical exhibitions, that those very men are affected and sympathize with the unfortunate, nay shed tears at their sufferings, who, if in the tyrant's place, would probably add to the torments of their enemies. Mandeville well knew that, in spite of all our morality, men would have never been otherwise than monsters, had not nature bestowed on them a sense of compassion, in aid of their reason: but he did not see that from this quality alone flowed all those social virtues, of which he disputed man's being in possession. In fact, what is generosity, clemency or humanity, but compassion applied to the weak, to the guilty, or to mankind in general? Nay, even benevolence and friendship, if we judge rightly, will appear to be only the effects of compassion, constantly exerted towards a particular object: for to wish that another person may not suffer pain and uneasiness, what is it less than to wish him happy? Were it even true, as is pretended by some, that pity is no more than a sentiment, which puts us in the place of the suffering object; a sentiment obscure though lively in a savage,

vage, developed tho' feeble in civilized man; this truth would have no other effect than to confirm my argument. Our compaſſion muſt, in fact, be ſo much the more ſtrong, the more intimately the animal, beholding any kind of diſtreſs, takes part, or identifies himſelf with the animal that ſuffers. Now, it is plain that ſuch identification muſt have been much more perfect in a ſtate of nature than it is in a ſtate of reaſon. It is reaſon that engenders ſelf-love, and it is reflection that cultivates and confirms it: it is that which makes man ſhrink into himſelf; it is that which makes him keep at a diſtance from every thing that may diſturb or afflict him. It is philoſophy that detaches him from the reſt of the world; that bids him exultingly ſay to himſelf, at ſight of the misfortunes of others, You may periſh if you will, I am ſecure. Nothing but ſuch general evils as threaten the whole community, can diſturb the tranquillity of the philoſopher, or rouſe him from his bed of down. A ruffian may with impunity commit a murder under his very window; he has no more to do than to ſtop his ears, and by a ſyllogiſm or two prevent that nature, which is ſhocked within him, from taking any part with the unfortunate ſufferer. Uncivilized man is deſtitute of this admirable talent; and for want of reaſon and prudence, is ever fooliſhly ready to obey the ſlighteſt ſuggeſtions of humanity. It is the loweſt of the populace that flock together at riots and ſtreet-brawls, the wiſe man prudentially ſneaks off. It is the mob, the porters and baſket-women, that part the combatants, and hinder gentle-folks from cutting one another's throats.

It is hence certain that compaſſion is a natural ſentiment, which, by moderating the violence of ſelf-love in individuals, contributes to the preſervation of the whole ſpecies. It is this compaſſion that hurries us without reflection, to the relief of thoſe who are in diſtreſs: it is this compaſſion which in a ſtate of nature ſupplies the place of laws, morals, and virtues; with this advantage, that none are tempted to diſobey her gentle voice: it is this compaſſion, which will ever prevent a ſturdy ſavage from robbing a weak child or a feeble old man, of the ſuſtenance they may have with pain and difficulty acquired, if he ſees even a bare poſſibility of providing for himſelf by other means: it is this compaſſion, which, inſtead of inculcating that ſublime maxim of rational juſtice, *Do to others as you would have them do to you*, inſpires all men with that other maxim of natural goodneſs, much leſs perfect indeed than the preceeding, but perhaps more uſeful; *Do good to yourſelf with as little evil as poſſible to others.* In a word, it is rather in this natural ſentiment, than in any ſubtle argumentation, we muſt look for the cauſe of that repugnance, which every man would experience at doing evil, even independently of the maxims of education. Although it might belong to Socrates and other privileged minds of the like caſt, to acquire virtue from reaſon, the human race would long ſince have had a period, had its preſervation depended only on the reaſonings of the individuals compoſing it.

Urged by paſſions ſo inactive, and reſtrained by ſo ſalutary a curb, mankind, being rather wild than wicked, and more intent to guard them-

themſelves againſt the miſchief that might be done them, than to do miſchief to others, were by no means ſubject to very perilous diſſentions. As they maintained no kind of correſpondence with each other, and were conſequently ſtrangers to vanity, veneration, eſteem and contempt; as they entertained not the leaſt ideas of *meum & tuum*, nor had any true notion of juſtice; as they looked upon every violence to which they were ſubject, rather as an injury that might be eaſily repaired than as a crime that merited chaſtiſement; and as they never thought of taking revenge, unleſs perhaps mechanically and immediately, as a cur will ſometimes turn about and bite the ſtones which are thrown at him; this being the caſe, I ſay, their quarrels would ſeldom have very bloody conſequences; the ſubject of them being no more highly intereſting than that of ſubſiſtence. But I am aware of a more dangerous one, which remains to be noticed.

Of the various paſſions, that agitate the heart of man, there is one, which renders the ſexes neceſſary to each other, and is extremely ardent and violent; a paſſion ſo terrible that it deſpiſes danger, ſurmounts all obſtacles; and which appears in its tranſports rather calculated to bring deſtruction on the human race than to preſerve it. What muſt become of men abandoned to this brutal and boundleſs rage, without modeſty, without ſhame, and diſputing daily the objects of their paſſion, at the expence of their blood?

It muſt, in the firſt place, be allowed that, where the paſſions are moſt violent, laws are the more neceſſary to keep them under due reſtraint. But, ſetting aſide the inſufficiency of

laws to effect this purpose, as is evident from the crimes and disorders to which these passions daily give rise, we should do well to enquire if these evils did not spring up with the laws themselves; for in this case, though the laws should be found capable of repressing such evils, it is the least that might be expected from them; as it is in fact no more than giving a check to that mischief which would not have happened without them.

Let us begin with distinguishing between the physical and moral ingredients in the passion of love. The physical part of love is that general desire, which urges the sexes to a personal union with each other. The moral part is that which determines and fixes this desire exclusively upon some one particular object; or at least gives it a greater degree of energy toward the object thus preferred. Now it is easy to see that the moral part of love is a factitious sentiment, engendered by the customs of society, and enhanced by the women with much care and address, with a view to establish their empire, and render that sex commanding which ought to obey. This sentiment, being founded on certain ideas of beauty and merit which a savage is not in a state to acquire, and on comparisons which he is incapable of making, must be very faint and obscure in him: for, as his mind cannot form abstract ideas of proportion and regularity, so his heart is not more susceptible of the sentiments of love and admiration; which are even insensibly produced by our application of those ideas. He listens solely to the desires which nature has implanted in his constitution, and seeks not to taste those which he could never acquire;

acquire; ſo that every woman equally anſwers his purpoſe.

Men in a ſtate of nature being confined merely to what is phyſical in love, and happy enough to be ignorant of thoſe excellencies, which ſerve to whet the appetite while they increaſe the difficulty of gratifying it, muſt be ſubject to fewer and leſs violent fits of that paſſion, and of courſe it muſt occaſion fewer and leſs violent diſputes among them. The imagination which cauſes ſo much diſturbance among us, never ſpeaks to the heart of ſavages, who quietly await the impulſes of nature, yield to them involuntarily, and with more pleaſure than ardour; their deſires never ſurviving the phyſical neceſſity of the thing deſired. It is therefore inconteſtable that even love, as well as all the other paſſions, muſt have acquired in ſociety that glowing impetuoſity, which makes it ſo often fatal to mankind. And hence it appears ſo much the more abſurd and ridiculous to repreſent the ſavages as cutting one another's throats to indulge their brutality, that this opinion is directly contrary to experience; the Caribeans, a people who have as yet leaſt of all deviated from a ſtate of nature, being in fact the moſt peaceable in their amours, and the leaſt ſubject, of any exiſting, to the paſſion of jealouſy; notwithſtanding they live in a hot climate which ſeems ever adapted to inflame the paſſions.

With regard to the inference that may be drawn from the practice of ſeveral ſpecies of animals; the males of which fill our poultry-yards with blood and ſlaughter, or at certain ſeaſons make the foreſts ring with their quarrels

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for their females; we muſt ſet out with the excluſion of all thoſe ſpecies, in which nature has plainly eſtabliſhed relations, in the comparative power of the ſexes, different from thoſe which ſubſiſt among us: thus we can form no concluſion from the example of fighting cocks that will affect mankind. In thoſe ſpecies where the proportion is better obſerved, their battles muſt be entirely owing to the ſcarcity of the females in compariſon with the males; or, what amounts to the ſame thing, to the intervals during which the female refuſes the embraces of the males: for if the female admits the male but during two months in the year, it is the ſame as if the number of females were five ſixths leſs. Now, neither of theſe two caſes is applicable to the human ſpecies, in which the number of females uſually exceeds that of the males; and among whom it has never been obſerved, not even among ſavages, that the females have, like thoſe of other animals, their ſtated times of paſſion and indifference. Add to this, that among ſeveral ſpecies of the brute creation, the individuals take fire at once, and for ſome time all is confuſion and diſorder among them; a ſcene which is never exhibited among the human ſpecies, whoſe love is not thus periodical. We muſt not conclude, therefore, from the combats of ſuch animals for the enjoyment of the females, that the caſe would be the ſame with mankind in a ſtate of nature: and though we might even draw ſuch a concluſion; yet, as we ſee theſe conteſts don't exterminate other kind of animals, we have no reaſon to think they would be more fatal to ours. It is indeed very probable they would do ſtill leſs miſchief, than

is done by conteſts on the ſame ſubject in a ſtate of ſociety; eſpecially in thoſe countries in which, morals being ſtill held in ſome repute, the jealouſy of lovers, and the vengeance of huſbands and wives are the daily cauſe of duels, murders, and even ſometimes, if poſſible, worſe crimes; the mutual obligation of eternal fidelity ſerving only to give occaſion to adulteries, and the very laws of honour and chaſtity neceſſarily tending to the increaſe of debauchery and the multiplication of abortions.

Let us conclude then that man in a ſtate of nature, wandering up and down the foreſts, without induſtry, without ſpeech, and without home; an equal ſtranger to war and to peace, without ſtanding in any need of his fellow-creatures, or having any deſire to hurt them, and perhaps even without ſeverally diſtinguiſhing them one from another; let us conclude, I ſay, that being thus ſubject to few paſſions, and, finding in himſelf all he wanted, he could have no ſentiment or knowledge but ſuch as was proper to his ſituation; that he was ſenſible only of his actual neceſſities, diſregarding every thing but what it immediately concerned him to take notice of; and that his underſtanding made no greater progreſs than his vanity. If by accident he made any diſcovery, he could the leſs communicate it to others, as he did not know even his own children. Every art muſt periſh with the inventor, when there was no kind of education among men, generations ſucceeding generations without the leaſt progreſs or improvement; whilſt, all ſetting out from the ſame point, whole centuries muſt have elapſed in the barbariſm of primitive ages, and

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the ſpecies be already grown old, while the individual remained ſtill a child.

If I have expatiated ſo largely on the ſuppoſition of this primitive ſtate, it is becauſe I had ſo many ancient errours and inveterate prepoſſeſſions to eradicate, and therefore thought it incumbent on me to dig to their very root; and to exhibit, in a true picture of nature, how far even the natural inequalities of mankind are from having that reality and influence which ſome writers pretend.

It is in fact eaſy to ſee that many of thoſe characteriſtical differences, which diſtinguiſh mankind, are merely the effect of habit and the different methods of life, adopted in ſociety. Thus a robuſt or delicate temperament of body, with the ſtrength or weakneſs attached to it, are more frequently the effects of an hardy or effeminate method of education than of the original conſtitution. It is the ſame thing with regard to the powers of the mind; education not only making a difference between ſuch as are cultivated, and ſuch as are not, but even increaſing that difference which ſubſiſts among the former, in proportion to their reſpective degrees of culture: even as the diſtance between a giant and a dwarf ſetting out on the ſame career conſtantly increaſes at every ſtep they take.

Now if we compare that prodigious diverſity, which obtains, in the education and manner of life of the various orders of men, in a ſtate of ſociety, with the uniformity and ſimplicity of mere animal and ſavage life, in which every individual is ſupplied with the ſame kind of aliment, lives exactly in the ſame manner, and does

exactly

exactly the same things; it may be easily conceived that the difference between man and man in a state of nature must be less than their difference in a state of society; and that the natural inequality of mankind must be greatly increased by the inequalities of social institutions.

But, though nature should really affect, in the distribution of her gifts, that partiality which is imputed to her, what advantage would the greatest of her favourites derive from it, to the detriment of others, in a state that admits hardly any kind of relation or connection between them? Where there is no love, of what advantage is beauty? Of what use is wit to those who do not converse, or cunning to those who have no business with others? I hear every body constantly repeating, that, in such a state the strong would oppress the weak; but let them explain to me what they mean by oppression? Some, it is said, would domineer over others, while the latter would groan under a servile submission to their caprices. This indeed is exactly what I observe to be the case in civil society; but I do not see with what propriety it can be inferred of men in a state of nature; who could not easily be brought to conceive what we mean by the terms dominion and servility. One man, it is true, might seize on the fruits which another had gathered, on the game he had killed, or on the cave he had chosen for shelter; but how would he be able to exact obedience of him, and what ties of dependance can there be among those who have no possessions? If I am driven, for instance,

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from one tree, or disturbed in any one place; what hinders me from going to some other? Again, should I happen to meet with a man so much stronger than myself, and at the same time so depraved, so indolent and so barbarous, as to compel me to provide his sustenance while he himself should remain idle; strong as he is, he must take care not to have his eyes off me a single moment; he must bind me fast before he takes his nap, or I should certainly either knock him on the head, or make my escape. That is to say, he must in such a case voluntarily expose himself to much greater trouble than any he seeks to avoid, or can give me. Nay after all this, let him be off his guard ever so little; let him but turn his head aside at any sudden noise, and I shall be instantly twenty paces off, lost in the forest; my fetters would be burst asunder, and he would never see me again.

Without expatiating, however, any longer on particulars, every one must see that the bonds of servitude being formed merely by the mutual dependance of mankind on each other, and the reciprocal necessities that unite them, it is impossible to make any man a slave, unless he be first reduced to such a situation as not to be able to subsist without the help of others: a situation which does not exist in a state of nature; in which every one therefore is his own master, and the pretended right of the strongest is futile and frivolous.

Having proved that the inequality of mankind, is in a manner imperceptible, and that its influence is next kin to nothing in a state of

nature; it remains for me to ſhew its origin and trace its progreſs in the ſucceſſive improvements of the human mind. Having ſhewn that human *perfectibility*, or the capacity of man for improvement, together with the ſocial virtues, and thoſe other faculties, of which natural man was virtually in poſſeſſion, could never be developed of themſelves; but muſt require the fortuitous concurrence of many foreign cauſes which might never happen, and without which he muſt remain for ever in his primitive ſituation; it now remains for me to collect and conſider the different accidents which may have improved the human underſtanding by depraving the ſpecies, having made him wicked by making him ſociable; and to bring him and the world from that early period to the point at which we now behold them.

I confeſs that, as the events I am going to deſcribe might have happened in many various ways, I have nothing to determine my choice but conjectures: but ſuch conjectures become in ſome meaſure reaſons, when they are not only the moſt probable that can be drawn from the nature of things, but the only means of inveſtigating the truth. The conſequences, however, which I mean to deduce will not be barely conjectural; as, on the principles juſt laid down, it is impoſſible to form any other theory that would not furniſh the ſame arguments, and from which I might not draw the ſame concluſions.

This will be a ſufficient apology for my not expatiating particularly on the manner, in which the lapſe of time compenſates for the little probability in the events; on the ſurpriſing power of

of trivial causes, whose action is constant; on the impossibility that subsists, on the one hand, of destroying certain hypotheses, if on the other we cannot give them that degree of certainty, which attends on known matters of fact; on its being within the province of history, when two facts are proposed as real, to be connected by a series of intermediate facts, unknown or supposed to be so, to supply such facts as may actually connect them; and in the province of philosophy when history is silent, to point similar facts to serve the same end; and in fine, on the influence of similitude, with regard to events, in reducing facts to a much smaller number of different classes than is commonly imagined. It is sufficient for me just to hint these objects to the consideration of my judges; and to have so managed the matter that common readers had no occasion to consider them at all.

PART

PART THE SECOND.

THE firſt perſon, who, having incloſed a piece of ground, bethought himſelf of ſaying *This is mine*, and found people ſimple enough to believe him, was the real founder of civil ſociety. From how many crimes, battles and murders, from how many horrors and miſfortunes would not that man have ſaved mankind, who ſhould have pulled up the ſtakes, or filled up the ditch, crying out to his fellows, "Beware of liſtening to this impoſtor; you are undone if you once forget that the fruits of the earth belong to us all, and that the earth itſelf belongs to nobody." But there is great probability that things were arrived to ſuch a pitch, that they could no longer continue in the ſame ſtate: for this idea of property depends ſo much on prior ideas, which could only be ſucceſſively acquired, that it could not be ſuggeſted all at once to the human mind. Mankind muſt have made a very conſiderable progreſs, they muſt have amaſſed a great ſtock of knowledge and induſtry; which they muſt alſo have tranſmitted and increaſed from age to age, before they arrived at this laſt term of a ſtate of nature. Let us recur therefore ſtill farther back, and endeavour to trace under one point of view that ſlow ſucceſſion of events and diſcoveries, as they proceeded in their natural order.

Man's

Man's firſt ſentiment was that of his own exiſtence, and his firſt care that of ſelf-preſervation. The produce of the earth furniſhed him with the means, and inſtinct directed him in the uſe of them. Hunger and other appetites made him at various times experience various modes of exiſtence: among theſe there was one which urged him to the propagation of his ſpecies; a blind propenſity that having nothing to do with the heart, produced only an act merely animal. This deſire once gratified, the two ſexes had nothing farther to do with each other; even the offſpring of their embraces caring as little for its mother, as ſoon as it could do without her.

Such was the condition of infant man; ſuch the life of an animal limited at firſt to mere ſenſations, and hardly profiting by the gifts beſtowed on him by nature, much leſs capable of entertaining a thought of forcing them from her. But difficulties ſoon preſented themſelves, and it became neceſſary to learn to ſurmount them: the height of the trees, which prevented his gathering their fruits; the competition of other animals deſirous of the ſame fruits; the ferocity of thoſe who attacked his perſon; all theſe things obliged him to apply himſelf to bodily exerciſes. It was neceſſary for him to be active, ſwift of foot, and vigorous in fight. Thoſe natural weapons, ſtones and ſticks, were eaſily found. Thus ſurmounting the obſtacles of nature, he learned to contend in caſes of neceſſity, with other animals, and to diſpute the means of ſubſiſtence even with other men, or to indemnify himſelf for what he was forced to give up to a ſtronger.

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In proportion as the ſpecies grew more numerous, the cares of individuals would increaſe. The difference of ſoils, climates, and ſeaſons, would introduce ſome difference of courſe into their manner of living. Barren years, from long and ſharp winters, or ſcorching ſummers parching the fruits of the earth, would require them to be more than ordinarily induſtrious. On the ſea-ſhore and the banks of rivers, they would invent the hook and line, and become fiſhermen. In the foreſts they would make bows and arrows, and become huntſmen and warriours. In cold countries they would clothe themſelves with the ſkins of the beaſts they had ſlain. The lightning, a volcano, or ſome lucky incident brought them acquainted with fire; a new relief againſt the rigour of winter: they next learned the way to preſerve this element, then the method to reproduce it when extinguiſhed, and at length that of uſing it to prepare the fleſh of animals, which before they had been accuſtomed to devour raw.

This repeated application of different beings to himſelf, and of one to the other, would naturally give riſe in the human mind to the perceptions of certain relations between them. Thus, for example, the relations which we denote by the terms, great, little, ſtrong, weak, ſwift, ſlow, fearful, bold, and the like, being occaſionally and almoſt inſenſibly compared, would at length produce in him a kind of reflection, or rather a mechanical ſort of prudence, which indicated to him the precautions moſt neceſſary to his ſecurity.

The new lights which would reſult from this developement, would augment his ſuperiority over other animals, by making him ſenſible of it.

it. He would now endeavour, therefore, to enſnare them; would play them a thouſand tricks; and though many of them might ſurpaſs him in ſwiftneſs or in ſtrength, he would in time become the maſter of ſome and the tyrant over others.

It is hence that man, when he firſt looked into himſelf, felt the firſt emotion of human pride; and this it was that, at a time when he ſcarce knew how to diſtinguiſh the different orders of beings, yet by looking upon himſelf as the firſt of animals, as one of a ſuperior ſpecies, he prepared the way, at a diſtance, for aſſuming pre-eminence as an individual.

Other men, it is true, were not then to him what they now are to us, and he had hardly any greater intercourſe with them, than he had with other animals; yet they were not neglected in his obſervations. The conformities, which he might in time diſcover between them, and between himſelf and his female, led him to form a judgment of others which might not then be perceptible; and finding that they all behaved as he himſelf would probably have done in like circumſtances, he naturally inferred that their manner of thinking and acting was altogether conformable to his own. This important truth, being once impreſſed deeply on his mind, would induce him, from a preſentiment more certain and much quicker than any kind of argument, to purſue the beſt rules of conduct, which he ought to obſerve towards them, for his own ſecurity and advantage.

Taught by experience that the love of happineſs is the ſole motive of all human actions, he now found himſelf in a capacity to diſtinguiſh

guiſh the few caſes, in which mutual intereſt might juſtify him in relying upon the aſſiſtance of his fellows; and alſo thoſe, which are ſtill fewer, wherein a concurrence of jarring intereſts might give cauſe to ſuſpect it. In the former caſe, he joined in the ſame herd with them, or at fartheſt in ſome kind of looſe aſſociation, that laid no tie or reſtraint on its members, and laſted no longer than the tranſitory occaſion that formed it. In the latter caſe, every one ſought his own private advantage, either by open force if he was ſtrong enough, or by addreſs and cunning, if he found himſelf the weakeſt.

In this manner, mankind might have inſenſibly acquired ſome groſs ideas of mutual engagements, and the advantages of fulfilling them: that is, juſt ſo far as their preſent and apparent intereſt was concerned: for, with regard to foreſight, they were perfect ſtrangers to it, and were ſo far from troubling themſelves about a futurity far diſtant, that they hardly entertained a thought of the morrow. If a deer was to be taken, every one ſaw that, in order to ſucceed, he muſt abide faithfully by his poſt: but if a hare happened to come within the reach of any one of them, it is not to be doubted that he purſued it without ſcruple; and, having ſeized his prey, cared very little, if by ſo doing he occaſioned his companions to miſs of catching the deer.

It is eaſy to conceive that ſuch kind of intercourſe would not require a language much more refined than that of rooks or monkeys, who aſſociate together, much to the ſame pur-

poſe, and in the ſame manner. Inarticulate cries, a multiplicity of geſtures and ſome imitative ſounds, muſt have been for a long time the univerſal language of our ſpecies; by adding to which, in every country ſome conventional articulate ſounds (of which, as I have already intimated, the firſt inſtitution is not very eaſy to explain) particular languages were produced; but thoſe rude and imperfect, and nearly ſuch as are now to be found among ſeveral ſavage nations. Hurried on by the rapidity of time, by the abundance of things I have to ſay, and by the almoſt inſenſible progreſs of things in their beginnings, I paſs over in an inſtant a multitude of ages; for the ſlower the events were in their ſucceſſion, the quicker may I be allowed to be in their deſcription.

Theſe firſt improvements enable mankind, at length, to make others with greater ſucceſs and rapidity. In proportion as they grew enlightened, they grew induſtrious. They ceaſed to fall aſleep under the firſt tree, or in the firſt cave that afforded them caſual ſhelter; but, lighting upon ſome flints, reſembling ſpades and hatchets, they made uſe of them to dig up the earth, and to cut down trees; with the branches of which they built themſelves huts; which they afterwards plaiſtered over with clay and dirt. This was the era of a firſt revolution, productive of the eſtabliſhment and diſtinction of families; and introductive of a kind of property, the ſource perhaps of a thouſand conteſts and quarrels. As the ſtrongeſt, however, were very probably the firſt who made themſelves cabbins, as they were ſenſible they

ſhould

ſhould be able to defend them, it may be concluded that the weak found it much eaſier and ſafer to imitate, than to attempt to diſlodge them: and as to thoſe who were once provided with cabbins, none could have any great inducement to appropriate that of his neighbour; not indeed ſo much becauſe it did not belong to him, as becauſe it could be of no uſe to him, being already provided; and as beſides he muſt expoſe himſelf to a deſperate battle with the occupier, before he could make himſelf maſter of it.

The firſt expanſions of the human heart, were the effects of a novel ſituation, which united huſbands and wives, parents and children, under one roof. The habit of living thus together ſoon gave riſe to the moſt delightful ſentiments the human heart is capable of entertaining; viz. conjugal love and paternal affection. Every family became a little ſociety, by ſo much the more intimately united as liberty and a reciprocal attachment were the only bonds of their union. The ſexes, whoſe manner of life had been hitherto the ſame, began now to adopt different cuſtoms and manners. The women became more ſedentary, and uſed to ſtay at home with their children, while the men went abroad in ſearch of their common ſubſiſtence. By living alſo a little more at their eaſe, both ſexes began to loſe ſomething of their ſtrength and ferocity: but, if individuals became, on the one hand, leſs able to encounter ſeparately the wild beaſts, they were, on the other hand, more readily called together to make a general reſiſtance.

The ſimplicity and ſolitude of man's life in this new ſituation, the paucity of his wants, and the implements he had invented to ſatisfy them, leaving him a great deal of leiſure, he employed it to furniſh himſelf with many conveniencies unknown to his fathers: and this was the firſt yoke he inadvertently impoſed on himſelf, and the firſt ſource of the evils he prepared for his deſcendants. For, beſides continuing thus to enervate both body and mind, theſe conveniences loſing by uſe almoſt all their fitneſs to pleaſe, and even degenerating into real conveniences, the want of them became far more diſagreeable than the poſſeſſion of them had been agreeable. They would have been unhappy to loſe them, though the poſſeſſion of them did not make them happy.

One may diſcover a little better here how the uſe of ſpeech inſenſibly took place, and improved in each family, and may form a conjecture alſo concerning the manner in which various particular cauſes might have extended and accelerated the progreſs of language, by rendering it daily more neceſſary. Earthquakes or inundations cauſed inhabited diſtricts to be ſurrounded with chaſms or waters. The violent revolutions that have happened in the globe tore off portions from the continent, and conſtituted iſlands. It is readily conceived that among men thus collected and compelled to live together, a general idiom of ſpeech muſt have took place much earlier, than among thoſe who ſtill wandered through the forcſts of the continent. Thus it is very poſſible, that after their firſt eſſays in navigation, the iſlanders brought over the uſe of ſpeech to the continent: and it

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is at leaſt very probable that communities and languages were firſt eſtabliſhed in iſlands, and even came to ſome perfection there before either of them were known to the inhabitants of the continent.

Every thing began now to change its aſpect. Mankind, heretofore vagrant in the woods, by taking to a more ſettled manner of life, flocked gradually together, formed ſeparate bodies, and at length in every country a diſtinct nation, united by character and manners, not by any regulations or laws; but by an uniformity of life, a ſameneſs of ſubſiſtence, and the common influence of the climate. A permanent vicinage could not fail of producing, at length, ſome kind of connection between different families. Among the young people of both ſexes, living in contiguous cabbins, the tranſient commerce required by nature, ſoon induced another kind not leſs agreeable, but from their mutual intercourſe more permanent. Men began now to examine into the difference of objects, and to make compariſons; they acquired imperceptibly the ideas of beauty and merit, which ſoon gave riſe to ſentiments of preference and diſtinction. In conſequence of ſeeing each other often, they could not do without ſeeing each other conſtantly. A tender and agreeable mode of ſentiment inſinuated itſelf into the ſoul, which the leaſt oppoſition converted into an impetuous fury: love gave birth to jealouſy; diſcord triumphed, and human blood was ſacrificed to the gentleſt of all the paſſions.

In proportion to the progreſs of ideas and ſentiments, and as the head and the heart proceed in their exerciſe, mankind go on to lay

aſide their original wildneſs; their private connections becoming every day more intimate as their general limits grow extenſive. They accuſtom themſelves now to aſſemble round a large tree; while ſinging and dancing, the genuine offſpring of love and leiſure, become the amuſement, or rather the occupation of men and women thus aſſembled together and having nothing elſe to do. Every one begins to reſpect another, and to be deſirous of having reſpect paid him in turn; and thus a value becomes affixed to public eſteem. Whoever ſings or dances beſt; whoever is the handſomeſt, the ſtrongeſt, the moſt dexterous, or the moſt eloquent, becomes the moſt diſtinguiſhed; and this was the firſt ſtep toward inequality, and at the ſame time toward vice. From theſe firſt diſtinctions aroſe on one ſide vanity and contempt; and on the other ſhame and envy: the fermentation, cauſed by which new leavens, produced at length combinations the moſt fatal to innocence and happineſs.

As ſoon as men began to ſhew each other mutual eſteem, and the idea of reſpect had got footing in the mind, every one of courſe put in his claim to it, and it became impoſſible to refuſe it to any with impunity. Hence aroſe the firſt obligations of civility even among ſavages; and hence every intended injury became an affront; becauſe, beſides the hurt which might reſult from it, the party injured was certain to find in it a contempt for his perſon often more inſupportable than the hurt itſelf.

Thus it is that every man, reſenting the contempt ſhewn for him by others, in proportion to his opinion of himſelf, revenge became terrible

terrible, and mankind by degrees became ſanguinary and cruel. Such was preciſely the ſtate to which moſt of the ſavage nations, which are known to us, were arrived: and it is for want of having made a proper diſtinction in our ideas, and remarking how very far they were from being in a ſtate of nature, that ſo many writers have precipitately concluded that man is naturally cruel, and requires civil inſtitutions to ſoften him; whereas nothing is more mild and gentle than man in his primitive ſtate, when placed by nature at an equal diſtance from the ſtupidity of brutes, and the fatal ingenuity of civilized man. Equally confined by inſtinct and reaſon to the ſole care of guarding againſt the miſchiefs which threaten him, he is reſtrained by natural compaſſion from doing any injury to others; to which he has not the leaſt inducement even in return for injuries received. For, according to the axiom of the ſagacious Mr. Locke, *There can be no injury, where there is no property.*

But it muſt be remarked that the ſociety thus formed, and the relations once eſtabliſhed among mankind, required of them qualities different from thoſe which they poſſeſſed from their primitive conſtitution. A ſenſe of morality beginning now to introduce itſelf into human actions, and every one, before the inſtitutions of laws, being his own judge and avenger of the injuries done him, that goodneſs which was ſuitable enough to a pure ſtate of nature, was no longer that which agreed with an infant ſtate of ſociety. It was requiſite that puniſhments ſhould be made more ſevere, in proportion as the opportunities of offending became

more frequent, and that the dread of vengeance ſhould ſtand in the place of the terror of the law.

Thus, though men were become leſs patient, and their natural compaſſion had already ſuffered ſome diminution, this period of the expanſion of the human faculties, keeping a juſt mean between the indolence of his primitive ſtate and the preſent petulant activity of our ſelf-love; it muſt have been the moſt happy and durable epoch of human life. The more we reflect on it, the more we ſhall find, that this ſtate was the leaſt ſubject of any other to change; the very beſt that could be, for mankind; and a ſtate, out of which nothing could have drawn him, but ſome ſiniſter accident, which it had been better for the publick good had never happened. The example of the ſavages, moſt of whom have been found in this ſtate, ſeems indeed to prove that mankind were formed ever to remain in it; that this ſituation was the real youth and vigour of the world, and that all ſubſequent improvements have been apparently ſo many ſteps toward the perfection of the individual, but in reality to the decrepitude of the ſpecies.

So long as men reſted content with their ruſtic cabbins; ſo long as they were ſatisfied with cloths made of the ſkins of other animals, and the uſe of thorns and fiſh-bones in ſewing theſe ſkins together; ſo long as they conſidered feathers and ſhells as ſufficient ornaments of dreſs; and continued to paint their bodies of different colours, to improve and adorn their bows and arrows, to form with ſharp-edged ſtones their fiſhing boats or clumſey inſtruments

ments of muſick; in a word, ſo long as they undertook ſuch performances only as a ſingle perſon could execute, and abided by ſuch arts, as did not require the joint labours of ſeveral hands, they lived free, healthy, honeſt and happy; at leaſt ſo far as their nature would admit of, continuing to enjoy all the pleaſures of a mutual and independent intercourſe. But from the inſtant they began to ſtand in need of each other's aſſiſtance; from the moment in which it appeared advantageous to any one man to poſſeſs the quantity of proviſions neceſſary for two, all equality diſappeared, property introduced itſelf, induſtry became indiſpenſible; vaſt foreſts became ſmiling fields, which it was found neceſſary for man to cultivate with the ſweat of his brow, and in which ſlavery and miſery were ſeen preſently to germinate and grow up with the harveſt.

Metallurgy and agriculture were the two arts, whoſe invention produced this grand revolution. The poets tell us it was gold and ſilver, but the philoſophers aſſure us it was iron and corn, which firſt civilized man, and ruined human-kind. Thus both one and the other were unknown to the ſavages of America, who for that reaſon have ſtill continued ſavage: there are nations alſo who ſeem to have continued in a ſtate of barbariſm while they exerciſed only one of theſe arts without the other. And one of the beſt reaſons, perhaps, that can be given why Europe hath been, if not ſooner, at leaſt more conſtantly and better civilized than the other parts of the world, is, that it is at once the moſt abundant in iron and the moſt fertile in corn.

It is very difficult to conjecture how mankind came firſt to know the nature and uſe of iron; for it is impoſſible to ſuppoſe they ſhould think of digging the ore out of the mine, and preparing it for ſmelting, before they knew what would be the conſequence of the proceſs. On the other hand, we have the leſs reaſon to ſuppoſe this diſcovery the effect of any accidental fire, as mines are only formed in barren places, bare of trees and plants; ſo that it looks as if nature had taken ſome pains to keep ſo hurtful a ſecret from us. There remains, therefore, only the extraordinary incident of ſome volcano; which, by ejecting metallic ſubſtances already fuſed, might ſuggeſt to the ſpectators a notion of imitating the proceſs of nature in that operation. And we muſt even conceive them, after all, poſſeſſed of an uncommon ſhare of fortitude as well as foreſight, to undertake ſo laborious a work, with ſo diſtant a view to the advantages that might reſult from it; yet theſe qualities are rarely thus united in minds more improved than we can ſuppoſe thoſe of theſe firſt diſcoverers.

With regard to agriculture, the principles of it were known long before they were put in practice; and it is indeed hardly poſſible that men, conſtantly employed in drawing their ſubſiſtence from plants and trees, ſhould not readily acquire a knowledge of the means made uſe of by nature for the propagation of vegetables. It was in all probability very late, however, before their induſtry took that turn, either becauſe trees, which together with their land and water game afforded them ſufficient food, did not require their attention; or becauſe they were ignorant

norant of the uſe of corn, or deſtitute of inſtruments to cultivate it; or becauſe they wanted foreſight in reſpect to future exigencies; or laſtly, becauſe they were deſtitute of the means of preventing others robbing them of the fruit of their labours.

On their growing more induſtrious, it is natural to conceive that they began, by the help of ſharp ſtones and pointed ſticks, to cultivate a few pulſe or roots, round about their cabbins; though it was long before they knew the method of dreſſing corn, or were provided with the implements neceſſary to raiſe it in any large quantity; not to mention how requiſite it is, in order to follow the buſineſs of huſbandry, to conſent to a preſent loſs, in order to reap a future gain; a precaution very foreign to the turn of mind in a ſavage; who, as I before obſerved, hardly foreſees in the morning what he ſhall have occaſion for at night.

The invention of other arts muſt therefore have been neceſſary to compel mankind to apply to that of agriculture. No ſooner were artificers wanted to ſmelt and forge iron, than other labourers were required to maintain them; while the more hands were employed in manufactures, the fewer were left to provide ſubſiſtence for all, though the number of mouths to be furniſhed with food continued the ſame: and as ſome required commodities in exchange for their iron, the reſt at length diſcovered the method of making iron ſerve to the multiplication of commodities. By this means the arts of huſbandry and agriculture were eſtabliſhed on the one hand, and the art of working metals, and multiplying the uſes of them, on the other.

As the earth was cultivated, it was neceſſarily diſtributed and parcelled out among the cultivators. Hence came property, and that once acknowledged, the firſt rules of juſtice: for, before every one could be ſecured in the enjoyment of his own, it was neceſſary for him to have ſomething to enjoy. Beſides, as men began to look forward into futurity, and were all in poſſeſſion, more or leſs, of ſomething capable of being loſt, every one of them in particular had reaſon to apprehend that repriſals would be made on him, for any injury he might do to another. This origin is ſo much the more natural, as it is impoſſible to conceive how property can be deduced from any thing but manual labour: for what elſe can a man add to things which he does not originally create, to have any pretence to property in them? It is the huſbandman's labour alone that, giving him a title to the produce of the ground he has tilled, gives him a claim alſo to the land itſelf, at leaſt till he hath reaped the fruits of his labour; which claim, being continued from year to year, forms a conſtant poſſeſſion which eaſily transforms itſelf into property.

When the ancients, ſays Grotius, gave to Ceres the title of Legiſlatrix, and to a feſtival celebrated in her honour the name of Theſmophoria, they gave the people by that to underſtand that the diſtribution of lands was productive of a new ſpecies of right: that is to ſay, a right of property different from that which is deducible from the law of nature.

Things being thus ſituated, an equality might have been kept up, had the talents of individuals been all equal, and if the uſe of iron, for example,

example, and the consumption of commodities, had constantly held an exact proportion with each other: but as this proportion had nothing to support it, it was soon broken through: the strongest performed the most labour; the cunningest turned his labour to best account; the most ingenious devised methods to diminish his labour: the husbandman wanted more iron, or the smith more corn, and while both laboured equally, the one gained a great deal by his work, while the other could hardly support himself. Thus it is that natural inequality displays itself insensibly with that of combination, and that the difference of mankind, unfolded by that of circumstances, becomes more sensible in its effects, and begins to have an influence, in the same proportion, over the lot of individuals.

Things once arrived at this pitch, it is easy to conceive the rest. I shall not detain the reader with a description of the successive inventions of other arts, the improvements of language, the trial and employment of talents, the inequality of fortunes, the use and abuse of wealth, nor of all those particulars which attend on these, and which are easily suggested. I shall confine myself to the taking a slight view of mankind, placed in this new situation of things.

Behold, then, all the human faculties developed; the memory and imagination in full play; self-love become interested; reason rendered active; and the mind arrived almost at the highest point of its perfection. Behold all the natural qualities put in action; the rank and condition of every man assigned him; not merely as to his share of property and his power to serve or injure others, but also as to genius, beauty,

beauty, ſtrength or addreſs, merit or talents: and theſe being the only qualities capable of commanding reſpect, it of courſe preſently becomes neceſſary to poſſeſs, or to affect them.

It became now the intereſt of men to appear what they really were not. To be and to ſeem, became two things totally different; and thus from this neceſſary diſtinction ſprung inſolent pomp and artful knavery, with all the numerous vices that compoſe their train. On the other hand, free and independent as mankind were before, they were now, in conſequence of a multiplicity of new wants, brought under ſubjection, as it were, to every thing in nature, and particularly to one another; each becoming in ſome degree a ſlave even in becoming a maſter: if rich, they ſtood in need of the ſervices of others; if poor, of their aſſiſtance; even mediocrity itſelf not enabling them to do without each other. Man muſt, now, therefore, have been perpetually employed in getting others to intereſt themſelves in his happineſs, and in making them apparently at leaſt, if not really, find their advantage in promoting his own. Thus he muſt have been ſly and artful in his behaviour to ſome, and imperious and cruel to others; being laid under a kind of neceſſity to uſe all thoſe perſons ill of whom he ſtood in need, when he could not awe them into a compliance with his will, and did not judge it his intereſt to purchaſe ſuch compliance at the expence of being really uſeful to them.

In fine, inſatiable ambition, the thirſt of raiſing their reſpective fortunes, not ſo much from real want as from the deſire of ſurpaſſing others, muſt inſpire all mankind with a vile

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propenſity to injure each other, and with a ſecret jealouſy, by ſo much the more dangerous, as it puts on the face of benevolence, to carry its point with the greater ſecurity. In a word, rivalry and competition on the one hand, jarring and oppoſite intereſts on the other, together with a ſecret deſire on both of profiting at the expence of others, univerſally prevailed. All theſe evils were the firſt effects of property, and the inſeparable retinue of growing inequality.

Before the invention of ſigns to repreſent riches, wealth could hardly conſiſt in any thing but lands and cattle, the only genuine property men can poſſeſs. But, when inheritances were ſo much increaſed as to occupy whole countries, and border on each other, it became impoſſible for one man to aggrandize himſelf but at the expence of ſome other; at the ſame time the ſupernumeraries, who had been too weak or too indolent to make ſuch acquiſitions, and were grown poor without ſuſtaining any loſs, becauſe while they ſaw every thing changed around them, they remained ſtill the ſame; theſe, I ſay, were obliged to receive their ſubſiſtence, or ſteal it, from the rich; whence there ſoon appeared, according to the different characters of each, dominion and ſlavery, or violence and rapine. The wealthy, on their part, had hardly begun to taſte the pleaſure of command, before they diſdained all others, and, making uſe of their old ſlaves to acquire new, thought of nothing but ſubduing and enſlaving their neighbours; juſt like thoſe ravenous wolves, which, having once taſted of human fleſh, deſpiſe every other food,

food, and seek only to devour men for ever after.

It is thus that the most powerful or the most miserable, considering their respective might or misery as a kind of claim to the possessions of others, equivalent, in their opinion, to that of property; the equality being once broken through, the breach of it was attended with the most terrible disorders. It is thus that the usurpations of the rich, the thefts of the poor, and the unbridled passions of both suppressing the cries of natural compassion and the feeble voice of justice, rendered mankind avaricious, ambitious and vicious. Between the title of the strongest and that of the first occupier, there arose perpetual conflicts, which never ended but in battles and bloodshed (17). The infant state of society thus admitted a horrid state of war; while mankind thus harrassed and depraved, were no longer capable of retreat or renouncing the fatal acquisitions they had made; but, labouring, in short, by the abuse of those faculties which do them so much honour, merely to their own confusion, brought themselves to the very brink of ruin.

Attonitus novitate mali, divesque miserque,
Effugere optat opes; et quæ modo voverat odit.

It is impossible that men should not at length, reflect on a situation so wretched, and on the calamities that overwhelmed them. The rich must, in particular, have presently been made sensible how much they suffered by a constant state of war, of which they bore all the expence;

pence; and in which, though all riſked their lives, they alone riſked their properties. Beſides, however ſpeciouſly they might colour over their uſurpations, they knew in fact that they were founded on precarious and falſe titles; ſo that others might deprive them by force, of what they by force acquired, without their having any room to complain of injuſtice. Nay, even thoſe who were enriched by their own induſtry, could ſcarce found their property on better claims. It was in vain any one repeated, "I built this well; I gained this ſpot by my "induſtry." Who gave you the limits, it might be objected, and what right have you to demand payment of us, for doing what we did not require you? Are you ignorant that numbers of your fellow-creatures are ſtarving, for want of what you poſſeſs in ſuperfluity? you ought to have had the expreſs and univerſal conſent of mankind, to appropriate to yourſelf more of their common ſubſiſtence than comes to your own private ſhare. Deſtitute of valid reaſons to juſtify and ſufficient force to defend himſelf; capable of cruſhing individuals with eaſe, but eaſily cruſhed himſelf by a troop of banditti; one againſt all, and incapable, on account of mutual jealouſy, to join with his equals againſt numerous enemies united by the common hopes of plunder, the rich man, thus urged by neceſſity, conceived at length the profoundeſt project that ever entered the mind: this was to employ in his favour, the forces even of thoſe who attacked him, to make allies of his adverſaries, to inſpire them with different maxims, and induce them to adore other inſtitutions

tutions as favourable to him as the law of nature was prejudicial.

With this view, after having represented to his neighbours the honour of a situation, which armed every man against another, rendering their possessions as burthensome as their wants were insufferable; and in which no safety could be expected either for the rich or the poor, he readily devised plausible arguments to make them close with his design. "Let us join, "said he, to guard the weak from oppression, "to lay a restraint on the ambitious, and se- "cure to every man the possession of what be- "longs to him: let us institute rules of justice "and peace, to which all may be obliged to "conform without exception of persons; rules "that may in some measure make amends for "the caprices of fortune, by subjecting equally "the powerful and the weak to the observance "of obligations that shall be reciprocal. Let "us, in a word, instead of turning our forces "against ourselves, collect them in a supreme "power; which may govern us by wise laws, "may protect and defend all the members of "the association, repulse their common ene- "mies, and maintain a constant harmony "among us."

A much shorter harangue to this purpose would have been sufficient to impose on men so little cultivated, and easily seduced; especially as they had too many disputes among themselves to live without arbiters, and too much ambition and avarice to subsist long without masters. All ran headlong into the yoke, in hopes of securing their liberty; for, they had just wit enough

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to perceive the conveniences of a political eſtabliſhment, they had not experience enough to enable them to foreſee the dangers of it. The moſt capable among them to diſcern theſe dangers were the very perſons who expected to benefit by them; and even the moſt prudent of them judged it not inexpedient to ſacrifice one part of their freedom to enſure the other; even as a man, dangerouſly wounded in his arm, parts with it, tho' reluctantly, to ſave the reſt of his body.

Such was, or it is natural to ſuppoſe, might have been the origin of ſociety and laws; which added to the fetters of the poor, and gave new power of dominion to the rich; (*18) which brought irretrievable deſtruction on natural liberty, fixed eternally the law of property and inequality, converted an artful uſurpation into unalterable right, and for the advantage of a few ambitious individuals, ſubjected all mankind to perpetual labour, ſlavery, and wretchedneſs.

It is eaſy to ſee how the eſtabliſhment of one community rendered that of all the reſt indiſpenſibly neceſſary, and how, in order to make head againſt ſuch united forces, it behoved the reſt of mankind to unite in turn. Societies being thus once formed, preſently multiplied and diffuſed themſelves over the face of the earth; in ſo much that ſcarce a corner of the world was left, in which a man could throw off the yoke, and withdraw his head from beneath the ſword which he ſaw perpetually ſuſpended, and that often on a breaking thread, over him. The civil law being thus become the common rule of conduct among the members of each community, the law of nature maintained

maintained its place only among different communities; where, under the name of the law of nations, it was qualified by certain tacit connections to render their mutual commerce practicable, and serve as a substitute to natural compassion; which, losing, when applied to societies, almost all that influence it had over individuals, exists no longer except in some great minds, some true cosmopolites, who, breaking through those imaginary barriers that separate different people, copy the example of our supreme Creator, and include the whole human race within the circle of their benevolence. But bodies politic, remaining thus in a state of nature among themselves, presently experienced the inconveniences which had obliged individuals to forsake it; this state becoming still more fatal to these great bodies than it had before been to the individuals of which they were composed. Hence those national wars, those battles, murders, and reprisals, which are so shocking both to nature and reason; together with all those horrid prejudices which place the honour of shedding human blood among the virtues. The most worthy men hence learned to consider the practice of cutting each others throats as a moral duty; at length they massacred their fellow-creatures by thousands without even so much as knowing for what; committing more murders in a single fight, and more violent outrages in the sacking of a single town, than were committed in a state of nature, for a succession of ages over the face of the whole earth. Such were the first effects, which we may conceive from the division of mankind into different communities. But to return to their institution. I know

know that many have imputed another origin to political ſocieties, ſuch as the conqueſt of the powerful, or the aſſociations of the weak. It is, indeed, no matter which of theſe cauſes we adopt in regard to what I would eſtabliſh. That which I have juſt laid down, however, appears to me the moſt natural for the following reaſons. *1ſt.* Becauſe, in the firſt caſe, the right of conqueſt being no right in itſelf, it could not ſerve as a foundation on which to build nother; the victor and the vanquiſhed ever remaining with reſpect to each other in a ſtate of war, unleſs the vanquiſhed being reſtored to the full poſſeſſion of their liberty, they ſhould voluntarily make choice of the victor for their chief. For till then whatever truce or capitulation may have been made between them, as ſuch capitulations were founded in violence, and of courſe *ipſo facto* void, there could not have ſubſiſted in this hypotheſis either a real ſociety or body politic, or any other law than that of the ſtrongeſt. *2dly.* Becauſe theſe words *ſtrong* and *weak* are, in the ſecond caſe, ambiguous; for during the interval between the eſtabliſhment of a right of property, or prior occupancy, and that of political government, the intent of theſe words is better expreſſed by the terms *rich* and *poor:* becauſe, in fact, before the inſtitution of laws, men had no other way to reduce their equals to ſubmiſſion, than by invading their property, or by parting with ſome of their own property to them.

3dly. Becauſe the poor, having nothing but their freedom to loſe, it would have been to the higheſt degree abſurd in them to reſign voluntarily

tarily the only bleſſing they enjoyed, without receiving any compenſation for it: whereas the rich, being ſenſible, if I may ſo expreſs myſelf, in every part of their poſſeſſions, it was much eaſier to do them a miſchief, and therefore more neceſſary for them to guard againſt it, and in ſhort, becauſe it is more reaſonable to ſuppoſe any thing to have been invented by a perſon to whom it could be of ſervice, rather than by one to whom it muſt have proved prejudicial.

Government had, in its infancy, no regular and conſtant form. The want of a competent fund of experience and philoſophy preventing mankind from ſeeing any but preſent inconveniences, they thought not of providing againſt the future till they preſented themſelves. In ſpite of the endeavours of their wiſeſt legiſlators, the political ſtate remained imperfect, becauſe it was little more than the work of chance; and, being ill begun, tho' time ſufficiently diſcovered its miſtakes, it could never remove its original defects. The work of reparation was conſtantly repeating, inſtead of the area being cleared and the old materials removed, as was done by Lycurgus at Sparta, to erect a ſolid and laſting edifice. Civil ſociety conſiſted at firſt merely of a few general terms of convention, which every member bound himſelf to obſerve, and for his performance of covenants the whole body became ſecurity to the reſpective individuals. Experience only could ſhew the weakneſs of ſuch a conſtitution, and how eaſily it might be infringed with impunity, from the difficulty of being convicted of faults, in which the publick alone were to be both witneſs and judge: hence the laws could

could not fail of being variouſly eluded; diſorders and inconveniences could not fail of being multiplied, till it became at length neceſſary to commit the dangerous truſt of public authority to the hands of private perſons, and the care of enforcing obedience to the deliberations of the people to the magiſtrate. For to pretend that chiefs were choſen before ſocial confederacies were formed, and that the adminiſtrators of the laws ſubſiſted before the laws themſelves, is a ſuppoſition too abſurd to merit a ſerious confutation. It would be as little reaſonable to ſuppoſe that mankind at firſt threw themſelves at the feet of an abſolute maſter, without making any conditions with him, or that the firſt expedient which proud and uncivilized men ſhould hit upon for their common ſecurity, was to run precipitately into ſlavery. For what reaſon, in fact, did they take to themſelves ſuperiors at all, if it was not in order that they might by their means be defended from oppreſſion, and protected in their lives, liberties and properties, which are in a manner the conſtitutional elements of their being? Now, in the relations between individuals, the worſt that can happen to one man being to find himſelf ſubjected to another, it would have been inconſiſtent with common-ſenſe to commence by beſtowing on a chief the only things, which they wanted his aſſiſtance to preſerve. What equivalent was it in his power to offer them in return for ſo ample a grant? And if he had preſumed to exact it under pretence of defending them, would he not have received the anſwer recorded in the fable; What can we grant more to the enemy? It is therefore

therefore beyond dispute, and indeed a fundamental maxim in politics, that people have preferred chiefs to protect not to enslave them. If we have a prince, said Pliny to Trajan, it is in order that he may prevent our having a master.

Politicians are guilty of the same sophistry in regard to the love of liberty, as philosophers are in respect to a state of nature. They judge by what they see, of things very different, which they have not seen; imputing to man a natural propensity to servitude, because the slaves within their observation are seen to bear their yoke without impatience; without reflecting that the case of liberty is the same with that of innocence or virtue; the value is not known except by those who possess them, and that a taste for them is forfeited when they are forfeited themselves. I know the charms of your country, said Brasidas to a Satrape, who was comparing the manner of life at Sparta with that at Persepolis, but it is out of your power to taste the pleasures of mine.

An unbroken horse erects his mane, paws the ground and starts back at the sight of the bridle; while that which is properly trained suffers patiently even the whip and spur: so savage man bends not his neck to that yoke, to which civilized man submits without murmuring; but prefers the most turbulent state of liberty to the most peaceful slavery. It is not therefore, from the servility of nations already enslaved, that we must form our judgment of the natural dispositions of mankind either for or against slavery; but rather from the prodigious efforts of every free people to prevent oppression.

ſion. I am ſenſible that the former are perpetually declaiming in praiſe of that tranquility they enjoy in their chains, and that they call a ſtate of wretched ſervitude a ſtate of peace: *miſerrimam ſervitutem pacem appellant:* But when I obſerve the latter ſacrificing pleaſure, peace, wealth, power and even life itſelf to the preſervation of that only treaſure, which is ſo much diſdained by thoſe who have loſt it; when I ſee free-born animals daſh their brains out againſt the bars of their cage, out of an innate impatience of captivity; when I behold numbers of naked ſavages, that deſpiſe European pleaſures, braving hunger, fire, the ſword, and even death itſelf, to preſerve their independency; I feel that it belongs not to ſlaves to argue about liberty.

With regard to paternal authority, from which abſolute government and indeed all kinds of ſociety have been deduced by many writers; it will ſuffice, without recurring to the contrary arguments of Locke and Sidney, to remark that nothing is farther from the ferocious ſpirit of deſpotiſm, than the mildneſs of that authority which regards more the advantage of him who obeys than that of him who commands; that by the law of nature, the father is maſter over the child no longer than his paternal aſſiſtance is neceſſary; that after that time they become both equal, the ſon being perfectly independent of the father, and owing him no obedience but only reſpect. For, as to gratitude; it is a duty which ought to be paid, but which none hath a right to exact. Inſtead of ſaying that civil

ſociety derives its origin from paternal authority, we ought to ſay rather that the latter derives its principal influence from the former. No individual was ever acknowledged as the father of many, till his ſons and daughters ſettled about him. The goods of the father, of which he is really the maſter, are the ties of his children's dependence, and he may beſtow on them, if he pleaſes, a ſhare of his property, in proportion as they may have merited it of him, by paying a conſtant obedience to his will. Now the ſubjects of an arbitrary deſpot, are ſo far from having the like favour to expect from their chief, that they themſelves and every thing they poſſeſs are his property, or at leaſt are conſidered by him as ſuch; ſo that they are forced to receive, as a favour, the little he is pleaſed to let them enjoy of their own. When he ſtrips them he does them but juſtice, and is merciful that he permits them to live.

By proceeding to compare, in this manner, the matter of fact with the matter of right, we ſhould diſcover full as little reaſon as truth in the voluntary eſtabliſhment of tyranny. It would alſo be no eaſy matter to prove the validity of a contract, binding only on one of the contracting parties; who ſhould at the ſame time ſtake every thing, and the other party nothing: ſo that none could ſuffer by ſuch contract but he who had bound himſelf by it. This hateful ſyſtem is indeed, even in modern times, very different from that of wiſe and good monarchs, and eſpecially of the kings of France; as may be ſeen by ſeveral paſſages in their edicts; particularly by that celebrated one

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publiſhed in 1667 in the name and by the orders of Lewis XIV; which contains the following paſſage.

"Let it not, therefore, be ſaid that the ſovereign is not ſubject to the laws of his realm; ſince the contrary propoſition is a maxim in the law of nations; which tho' flattery hath ſometimes attacked, good princes have always defended, as the tutelary divinity of their dominions. How much more juſt and rational is it to ſay, with the wiſe Plato, that the perfect felicity of a kingdom conſiſts in the obedience of ſubjects to their prince, that of the prince to the laws, and in the laws being juſt and conſtantly directed to the public good!"

I ſhall not ſtay here to enquire whether, as free-will is the nobleſt faculty of man, it be not degrading our very nature; reducing ourſelves to a level with the brutes, the mere ſlaves of inſtinct; and even an affront to the Author of our being, to renounce without reſerve the moſt precious of all his gifts, and to ſubject ourſelves to the commiſſion of all the crimes he has forbidden us, merely for the gratification of a mad or cruel maſter; or if this ſublime artiſt ought not to be leſs irritated at ſeeing his workmanſhip entirely deſtroyed than thus diſhonoured. I ſhall aſk only, what right thoſe, who were not afraid thus to debaſe themſelves, could have to ſubject their poſterity to the ſame ignominy; and to renounce for them thoſe bleſſings which they do not owe to the liberality of their progenitors, and without which life itſelf muſt be a burthen to all thoſe who are worthy of it?

Puffendorf says, that we may divest ourselves of our liberty in favour of other men, in the same manner as we transfer our property from one to another by contracts and agreements. But this seems to be a very weak argument. For in the first place, the property I alienate becomes quite foreign to me, nor can I suffer from the abuse of it; but it very nearly concerns me that my liberty is not abused; and I cannot without incurring in a great degree the guilt of what crimes I may be compelled to commit, expose myself to become the instrument of any. Besides, the right of property being only of human institution, men may dispose of what they possess just as they please: but it is not the same with the essential blessings of nature, such as life and liberty; which every man is permitted to enjoy, and of which it is at least dubious whether any have a right to divest themselves. By giving up the one, we degrade our being; by giving up the other, we do all in our power to annihilate it; and, as no temporal enjoyment can indemnify us for the loss of either, it would be an offence at once to reason and nature to renounce them upon any account whatever.

But, tho' it were in our power to transfer our liberty, as we do our property, yet there would be a wide difference with regard to our children, who enjoy our substance only by virtue of a cession of our right; whereas, liberty being a gift frankly bestowed on them by nature, their parents have no right whatever to divest them of it. Hence, to establish slavery, it was evidently necessary to do violence to nature, and thus it became necessary to alter nature,

ture, in order to perpetuate ſuch a right. In the mean time, the civilians who have gravely determined that the child of a ſlave comes into the world a ſlave, have decided, in other words, that a man does not come into the world a man.

It appears hence to me inconteſtable, that governments did not commence with arbitrary power; but that this is the depravation, the extreme term of government; bringing it back, at length, to the law of the ſtrongeſt; againſt which it was at firſt deſigned as a remedy. Admitting, however, that they had begun in this manner, ſuch power, as it was illegal in itſelf, could not have ſerved as a baſis to the laws of ſociety, nor of conſequence to the inequality of its inſtitution.

Without entering at preſent upon the diſcuſſion, that ſtill remains to be made, of the nature of the fundamental compact of all government; I content myſelf with adopting the common opinion concerning it, and confine myſelf here to the eſtabliſhment of the political body as a real contract between the people and the chiefs elected by them: a contract by which both parties bind themſelves to obſerve the laws therein expreſſed, which form the ties of their union. The people having in reſpect to the ſocial relations ſubſiſting between them, concentrated all their wills in one perſon, the ſeveral articles, concerning which this will is explained, become ſo many fundamental laws, obligatory on all the members of the ſtate without diſtinction: at the ſame time, that one of theſe laws regulates the choice, and the power, of the magiſtrates, appointed to obſerve the execution of the whole.

This power extends to every thing relative to the ſupport and maintenance of the conſtitution; but not to any thing that may tend to alter it. It is accordingly accompanied by honours, in order to render the laws and the adminiſtrators of them reſpectable. Theſe miniſters are alſo diſtinguiſhed by certain perſonal prerogatives, in order to make them ſome recompenſe for the cares and fatigues, inſeparable from a good adminiſtration. The magiſtrate, on his ſide, obliges himſelf to uſe the power he is entruſted with, conformably to the deſign of his conſtituents; to maintain them all in the peaceable poſſeſſion of their property; and to prefer on every occaſion the public to his own particular intereſt. Before experience had ſhewn, or a knowledge of the human heart enabled us to foreſee the unavoidable abuſes of ſuch a conſtitution, it muſt have appeared ſo much the more compleat, as thoſe perſons who were charged with the care of its preſervation found themſelves intereſted in it; for the office and privileges of magiſtracy being ſolely built on the fundamental laws of the conſtitution, the magiſtrates would ceaſe to be lawful as ſoon as ever theſe ceaſed to exiſt; the people would no longer owe them obedience; and as the laws, not the magiſtrates, are eſſential to the being of a ſtate, the ſeveral members of it would become entitled to their natural liberty.

If we reflect with ever ſo little attention on this ſubject, we ſhall find new arguments ſuggeſt themſelves in confirmation of its truth, and that we might be convinced alone from the very nature of the contract that it cannot be irrevocable:

irrevocable: for, if there were no ſuperior power capable of enſuring the fidelity of the contracting parties, and of obliging them to perform their reciprocal engagements, they would be ſole judges in their own cauſe, and each of them have a right to renounce his contract, as ſoon as he found that the other had violated the terms of it, or that thoſe terms no longer ſuited his private convenience. It is upon this principle that the right of abdication may poſſibly be founded. Now, to conſider only what is merely human in this inſtitution, it is certain that, if the magiſtrate, who has all the power in his own hands, and appropriates to himſelf all the advantages of the contract, hath a right to diveſt himſelf of his authority; the people, who ſuffer for all the faults of their chief, have a much better right to renounce their dependence on him. But the terrible and innumerable diſorders that would neceſſarily ariſe from ſo dangerous a privilege, ſufficiently demonſtrate how much human governments ſtood in need of a more ſolid baſis than that of mere human reaſon, and how expedient it was for the public tranquility that providence ſhould interpoſe to inveſt the ſovereign authority with a ſacred and inviolable character; which might deprive ſubjects of the pernicious right of diſpoſing of it to whomſoever they pleaſed. If the world had received no other advantages from religion, this alone would be ſufficient to induce mankind to adopt and cultivate it, as it hath been the means of ſaving more blood than fanaticiſm hath cauſed to be ſpilt. But to follow the clue of our hypotheſis.

The different forms of government owe their origin to the inequalities ſubſiſting between individuals at the time of their forming themſelves into a community. If there happened to be any one man among them greatly pre-eminent in power, in virtue, in riches or perſonal influence, he became ſole magiſtrate, and the ſtate aſſumed the form of monarchy. If ſeveral nearly equal in point of eminence ſtood above the reſt, they were elected jointly, and formed an ariſtocracy. Again, among a people who had deviated leſs from a ſtate of nature, and between whoſe fortune or talents there was no ſuch diſproportion, they retained the ſupreme adminiſtration in common, and formed a democracy. It was diſcovered in proceſs of time, which of theſe forms ſuited mankind the beſt. Some people remained altogether ſubject to the laws; others ſoon became ſlaves to their magiſtrates. The former laboured to preſerve their liberty; the latter, irritated to ſee others enjoy a bleſſing they had loſt, employed their thoughts ſolely in making ſlaves of their neighbours. In fine, the one poſſeſſed themſelves of wealth and conqueſt, and the other of happineſs and virtue.

In theſe different governments, the offices were at firſt elective; and when the influence of wealth was out of the queſtion, the preference was allowed to merit, which gives a natural aſcendant; and to age poſſeſſed of experience in buſineſs ſedateneſs and deliberation in council. The Elders among the Hebrews, the Geronts at Sparta, and the Senate at Rome, nay the very etymology of our word Seigneur, ſerve to ſhew how much grey hairs were

were formerly held in veneration. But the more frequently the choice fell upon old men, the more frequently it was of courſe to be repeated, and the more the trouble of ſuch repetitions were felt; the intrigues of electioneering took place; factions were formed; parties grew inveterate; civil wars aroſe; the lives of individuals were ſacrificed to the pretended welfare of the ſtate; and at length matters were carried ſo far as to be on the point of relapſing into their primitive ſtate of anarchy and confuſion. The ambition of the chiefs induced them to profit by theſe circumſtances, to perpetuate their reſpective offices in their ſeveral families: at the ſame time the people, accuſtomed to dependence, to eaſe, the conveniences of life, and already incapable of breaking their fetters, agreed to augment their ſlavery, in order to ſecure their tranquility. Thus it was, that magiſtrates became hereditary, contracting the habit of conſidering their offices as a family eſtate, and themſelves as proprietors of thoſe communities, of which they were at firſt but the officers; to regard their fellow-citizens as their ſlaves, and to look upon them as part of their ſtock of cattle; ſtiling themſelves equal to the Gods and Kings of kings.

If we follow the progreſs of inequality in theſe different revolutions, we ſhall find that the eſtabliſhment of laws and the right of property was the firſt term of it; the inſtitution of magiſtrates the ſecond; and the converſion of legal into arbitrary power the third and laſt; ſo that the difference between rich and

poor were authorized by the firſt; that between the powerful and the weak by the ſecond; and that between maſter and ſlave by the third; the laſt being the ultimate degree of inequality, and that term at which all the reſt having at length arrived remain, till the government is entirely diſſolved by new revolutions, or brought back again to a legal conſtitution.

To comprehend the neceſſity of this progreſs, we are not to conſider ſo much the motives for the eſtabliſhment of bodies politic, as the forms they aſſume in their adminiſtration, and the inconveniences that neceſſarily attend them: for the vices which render ſocial inſtitutions neceſſary are the very ſame which render the abuſe of them unavoidable. If we except, alſo, Sparta alone, whoſe laws chiefly regarded education, and where Lycurgus eſtabliſhed ſuch cuſtoms and manners, as in a great meaſure rendered laws needleſs; the laws in general, being leſs forcible than the paſſions, reſtrain mankind without altering them; ſo that it would not be difficult to prove that every government, which ſhould ſcrupulouſly comply with the ends of its inſtitution, carefully guarding againſt change and corruption, hath been unneceſſarily inſtituted; for a country, in which no one ſhould either evade the laws or make an ill uſe of magiſterial power, could require neither laws nor magiſtrates. Political diſtinctions neceſſarily induce ſocial diſtinctions. The inequality increaſing between the chiefs and the people, ſoon becomes perceptible among individuals, and receives various modifications according to paſſions, talents and circumſtances.

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The magiſtrate cannot uſurp any illegal power, without diſtinguiſhing his creatures, with whom he muſt ſhare it. Add to this, that individuals ſuffer themſelves to be oppreſſed only in proportion as they are hurried on by a blind ambition; and looking rather below than above them, they come in time to love authority more than independence. When they ſubmit to ſlavery, it is only that they may enſlave others in turn. It is no eaſy matter to make him obey, who has no ambition to command; nor would the moſt refined policy find it poſſible to enſlave a people who ſhould only deſire to be independent. But inequality eaſily makes its way among baſe and ambitious minds, ever ready to run any riſk, and almoſt indifferent whether they command or obey, as fortune is favourable or adverſe. Thus, there muſt have been a time, in which the ſenſes of the people were faſcinated to ſuch a degree, that their rulers had only to ſay to the moſt pitiful wretch, "Be great, you and all your poſterity," to make him immediately appear great in the eyes of every one as well as his own. His deſcendents took ſtill more upon them, and that in proportion to their diſtance; the more obſcure and uncertain the cauſe, the greater the effect: the greater number of idlers any family had produced, the more illuſtrious it was accounted.

If this were a place to deſcend to minute particulars, I could readily explain how inequalities in point of credit and authority became unavoidable among private perſons, (19) as ſoon as ever their union obliged them to compare themſelves one with another, and to

remark the differences which they find by the continual use every man must make of his neighbour. These differences are of several kinds; but riches, rank, power and personal merit, being the principal distinctions, by which men form an estimate of each other, in a state of society, I could prove that the harmony or incongruity of these different forces, is the surest indication of the good or bad original constitution of any state. I could shew that among these four kinds of inequality, personal qualities being the origin of all the others, wealth is that in which they all terminate; because tending most immediately to the prosperity of individuals, and being the most easy of communication, riches are made use of to purchase every other distinction.

We are enabled to judge, by this observation, pretty exactly, how far a people may have deviated from their primitive institution, and how far they have still to go, ere they arrive at the extreme term of corruption. I could explain how much this universal desire of reputation, honour and preference, with which we are all inflamed, exercises our faculties and powers; how much it excites and multiplies our passions; and, by creating an universal competition, or rather enmity among mankind, occasions numberless disappointments, and catastrophies among the innumerable pretenders whom it engages to enter on the same career. I could shew that it is to this desire of being talked of, to this unremitting rage of distinguishing ourselves, that we owe the very best, and the worst things among us, our virtues

tues and our vices; our ſciences and our errours, our heroes and our philoſophers; that is to ſay, a great many bad things, and a very few good ones. In a word, I could prove that, if we have a few rich and powerful men placed on the pinnacle of fortune and grandeur, while the groveling croud are in want and obſcurity, it is becauſe the former prize what they enjoy only in the degree that others are deſtitute of it; and that, without changing their condition, they would ceaſe to be happy the moment the people ceaſed to be miſerable.

Theſe particulars alone, however, would furniſh matter for a more conſiderable performance; in which might be eſtimated the advantages and diſadvantages of every ſpecies of government, relatively to man in a ſtate of nature, and at the ſame time might be unveiled all the different appearances which inequality hath at times put on to this day, and may hereafter put on, even to the end of time, according to the nature of thoſe ſeveral governments, and thoſe alterations in them which muſt unavoidably be occaſioned by time. We ſhould then behold the multitude oppreſſed by domeſtic tyrants, in conſequence of the very precautions taken to guard againſt foreign tyrants. We ſhould ſee oppreſſion continually gain ground without its being poſſible for the oppreſſed to know where it would ſtop, or what lawful means might be left them to check its progreſs. We ſhould ſee the rights of individuals, and the freedom of nations by ſlow degrees extinguiſhed, and the complaints, proteſts and appeals of the weak neglected as ſeditious murmurings. We ſhould

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ſee the honour of defending the common cauſe confined by policy, to a mercenary part of the people. We ſhould ſee impoſts and taxes rendered neceſſary by ſuch means; and the diſheartened huſbandman leave his fields even in the midſt of peace, and quit the plough to take up the ſword. We ſhould ſee fatal and capricious maxims eſtabliſhed with regard to points of honour; the champions of their country ſooner or later becoming her enemies, and perpetually pointing their ſwords to the breaſts of their fellow-citizens. The time would even come when they might be heard to ſay to the oppreſſor of their country,

Pectore ſi fratris gladium juguloque parentis
Condere me jubeas, gravidæque in viſcera partu
Conjugis, in vitâ peragam tamen omnia dextrâ.

From the great inequality of fortunes and conditions, from the vaſt variety of paſſions and of talents, of uſeleſs and pernicious arts, of frivolous ſciences, would ariſe a multitude of prejudices equally contrary to reaſon, happineſs and virtue. We ſhould ſee the magiſtrates foment every thing that might ſerve to weaken men united in ſociety, by promoting diviſions among them; every thing that ſows in it the ſeeds of actual diviſion, while it breathes the air of apparent harmony; every thing that can inſpire the different ranks of people with mutual hatred and diſtruſt, by an oppoſition of their rights and intereſts, and of courſe ſtrengthen that power which comprehends them all.

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It is from the midſt of this diſorder and theſe revolutions, that deſpotiſm, gradually rearing up its frightful head, and devouring every thing that remained ſound and untainted in any part of the ſtate, would at length trample both on the laws and the people, and eſtabliſh herſelf on the ruins of the republick. The times which ſhould immediately precede this laſt change, would be times of trouble and calamity; but at length the monſter would ſwallow up every thing, and the people would no longer have either chiefs or laws; but merely tyrants. From this inſtant there would be no longer any regard paid to virtue or morals: for deſpotiſm *cui ex honeſto nulla eſt ſpes*, wherever it prevails, admits of no other maſter; it no ſooner ſpeaks than probity and duty loſe their influence; the moſt implicit obedience being the only virtue which ſlaves can practiſe.

This is the laſt term of inequality, the point that cloſes the circle, and meets that from which we ſet out. Here it is that private perſons return to their primitive equality, becauſe they are no longer of importance; and that, ſubjects having no longer any law but the will of their maſter, nor their maſter any other reſtraint than his paſſions, all notions of moral good and all principles of equity vaniſh. It is here that every thing returns to the law of the ſtrongeſt, and of courſe to a new ſtate of nature, differing from what we ſet out from; as that was a ſtate of nature in its firſt purity, and this the conſequence of exceſſive corruption. There is ſo little difference between the two ſtates in other reſpects, and the contract of government

vernment is so far dissolved by despotism, that the despot is no longer master than while he remains the strongest; but as soon as he can be expelled, he may be so without having any right to complain of injustice. The popular insurrection, that ends in the death or deposition of a sultan, is as lawful an act as those by which he might, the day before, dispose of the lives and fortunes of his subjects. As he was supported alone by force, so is he by the same force subverted. Thus every thing takes place according to natural order; and whatever may be the event of such frequent and precipitate revolutions, no one man has reason to complain of the injustice of another, but only of his own ill-fortune or indiscretion.

In thus pursuing the almost obliterated traces, by which man hath passed from a state of nature, to a state of society; by restoring with the intermediate situations which I have pointed out, those which want of time hath obliged me to suppress, or my imagination hath not suggested; the attentive reader cannot fail to be struck at the vast distance which separates the two states. It is in tracing this slow succession of things he may find the solution of a number of problems in politics and morals, which philosophers find it very difficult to solve.

He will perceive that, mankind being different in different ages, the reason why Diogenes could not find out a man, was that he sought among his contemporaries the man of an earlier period. He will see that Cato fell with Rome and liberty, because he did not suit the age in which he lived; the greatest of men serving only to astonish that world, which would have readily obeyed

obeyed him, had he lived five hundred years ſooner. In a word, he will find himſelf in a condition to comprehend how the ſoul, and the paſſions of men change as it were by inſenſible alterations, their very nature; how our wants and pleaſures in the end change their objects; and how the original man vaniſhing by degrees, ſociety offers to our inſpection only an aſſemblage of artificial men and factitious paſſions; the work of theſe ſeveral new relations, and without any foundation in nature. We are taught nothing on this ſubject, by reflection, but what is entirely confirmed by experience. The ſavage and the civilized man differ ſo much with regard to their paſſions and inclinations, that thoſe things which conſtitute the happineſs of the one, would reduce the other to deſpair. The firſt requires nothing but ſuſtenance, liberty and reſt; he deſires only to live and be exempt from labour; nay the apathy of the ſtoic falls ſhort of his conſummate indifference for every other object.

Civilized man is, on the contrary, perpetually in motion, ſweating, toiling and racking his brains to find out occupations ſtill more laborious: he continues drudging to his laſt moment, and even ſeeks death to put himſelf in a ſituation to live, or renounces life to acquire immortality. He pays his court to men in power, whom he hates; and to the wealthy, whom he deſpiſes; he ſtops at nothing in order to have the honour of ſerving them; he is not aſhamed to value himſelf on his own meanneſs and their protection; while, proud of his chains, he ſpeaks with diſdain of thoſe, who have

have not the honour of wearing them as well as himſelf.

What a ſight would the perplexing and envied labours of an European miniſter of ſtate, preſent to the eyes of a Carribean! What a cruel death would not this indolent ſavage prefer to ſuch a horrid life, the labours of which are ſeldom even ſweetened by the pleaſure of doing good! But, to ſee into the motives of all this ſolicitude, it is requiſite that the words *power* and *reputation*, ſhould have ſome meaning affixed to them in his mind; it is requiſite he ſhould know that there are men who ſet a value on the looks of the reſt of mankind: who can be made happy and ſatisfied with themſelves rather on the teſtimony of other people than on their own. In reality, the ſource of all theſe differences is, that the ſavage lives within himſelf; while the citizen conſtantly lives beſide himſelf, ſtudying only how to live in the opinion of others; inſomuch that he ſeems to receive the conſciouſneſs of his own exiſtence merely from the judgment of others concerning him. It is not to my preſent purpoſe to inſiſt on the great indifference for good and evil which takes riſe from this diſpoſition, in ſpite of our many fine diſcourſes of morality; or to ſhew how every thing of this kind being reduced to appearances, all is mere art and mummery, including even honour, friendſhip, virtue, and often even vice itſelf, of which we at length learn the ſecret to make our boaſt; to ſhew, in ſhort, how being ever on the inquiry of others what we are, and never daring to aſk ourſeves ſo delicate a queſtion, in the midſt

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of ſo many ſublime maxims of philoſophy, humanity and politeneſs, we have nothing to ſhew for ourſelves but a frivolous and deceitful external appearance; honour without virtue, reaſon without wiſdom, and pleaſure without happineſs.

It is ſufficient that I have proved this not to be the original ſtate of man; but that it is merely the ſpirit of ſociety, and the inequality which ſociety produces, that thus transform and diverſify all our natural inclinations.

Thus have I endeavoured to trace the origin and diſplay the progreſs of the inequality of mankind; with the inſtitution and abuſe of political ſocieties, as far as theſe things are capable of being deduced from the nature of man merely by the light of reaſon, and independent of thoſe ſacred tenets which give the ſanction of divine right to ſovereign authority. The inferences which may be drawn from a view of this exhibition, are, *firſt*, that as there is hardly any inequality among men in a ſtate of nature, all the inequality which now prevails, owes its ſtrength and growth to the development of our faculties and the improvement of our underſtanding; becoming at length permanent and lawful by the eſtabliſhment of property and the inſtitution of laws. *Secondly*, it follows that a moral inequality, authorized by any right merely arbitrary, claſhes with natural right, as often as it does not combine in the ſame proportion as phyſical inequality; a diſtinction which determines ſufficiently what we ought to think of that ſpecies of inequality which prevails in all civilized countries; ſince it

it is plainly contrary to the law of nature, that infants ſhould command old men, fools conduct philoſophers, and that the privileged few ſhould gorge themſelves with ſuperfluities, while the ſtarving multitude are in want of the common neceſſaries of life.

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DEDICATION, Page 139.

(1.) HErodotus relates that, after the murder of the falſe Smerdis, the ſeven deliverers of Perſia, being aſſembled in order to deliberate on the form of government, which was moſt proper to adopt for the ſtate, Otanes ſtrongly recommended the republican; a piece of advice the more extraordinary as it came from a Satrape, who might have formed ſome pretenſions to the throne: beſides, men in power generally dread more than death a ſpecies of government, which obliges them to reſpect other men. This advice of Otanes was, as we may well conceive, totally diſregarded: ſeeing the reſt therefore proceeding to the election of a monarch, and being neither deſirous to command or obey, he voluntarily gave his right to the crown among the other competitors, requiring only that he and his poſterity ſhould remain free and independent, which was granted. Now, though Herodotus had not acquainted us with the bounds ſet to this privilege, we ſhould be obliged to ſuppoſe it had ſome limits; otherwiſe Otanes, acknowledging no kind of legal reſtraint, nor being bound to give any one an account of his conduct, would have been ſo powerful that he might have done

done what he pleaſed; even more powerful than the King himſelf. But there was little probability that a man, capable of contenting himſelf with ſuch a privilege on ſuch an occaſion, ſhould ever make a bad uſe of it. In fact, it does not appear that this privilege ever cauſed the leaſt diſturbance in the kingdom, either from the prudent Otanes or any of his deſcendants.

PREFACE, Page 153.

(2.) I build with confidence, at my firſt ſetting out, on one of thoſe authorities which are reſpected by philoſophers, becauſe derived from ſolid and ſublime reaſons; which they alone know how to diſcover.

"However intereſting may be the knowledge of ourſelves, I am not clear that we are not much better acquainted with thoſe things that do not belong to us. Furniſhed by nature with organs ſolely adapted to our preſervation, we employ them only in receiving foreign impreſſions. We ſeek only to extend our being, and exiſt out of ourſelves; too buſy in multiplying the offices of our ſenſes, and increaſing the external ſenſe, which contracts us within our real dimenſions, and ſeparates every thing external from our being. It is this ſenſe, however, that we ought to employ in acquiring ſelf-knowledge, as it is the only one by which we can form a judgment of ourſelves. But the difficulty lies in giving this ſenſe its activity and whole extent, and in clearing the ſoul, wherein it reſides, of every illuſion of the underſtanding. We have loſt the habit of employing it, ſo that it hath long remained in a ſtate of inactivity, amidſt all the tumult of our corporeal

poreal ſenſations, dried up by the fire of our paſſions: the heart, the mind, the ſenſes all have laboured againſt it." *Hiſt. Nat. T. 4. p. 151. de la Nat. de l'homme.*

DISSERTATION, Page 168.

(3.) The changes which may have been produced in the conformation of man's body, by the habit of walking upon two legs, the ſimilitude alſo ſtill obſervable between his arms and the fore-legs of quadrupeds, together with the inferences to be drawn from their manner of walking, are ſufficient to give occaſion to ſome doubt which was the moſt natural to us. Children begin to walk by ſcrabbling on all-fours, and require both precept and example to ſuſtain themſelves upright. There are even ſome ſavage nations, as the Hottentots for inſtance, who, being careleſs of their children, ſuffer them to walk ſo long on their hands, that it is with great difficulty they bring them afterwards to aſſume an erect poſture. It is the ſame with the children of the Carribeans, and other Weſt-India ſavages. I could even produce ſeveral inſtances of human quadrupeds: particularly that of the child, who was found, in 1344, near Heſſe-Caſſel, where he had been ſuckled by wolves, and who uſed to ſay afterwards at Prince Henry's court, that if it were left to his choice, he would rather return to live with the wolves again, than to live among mankind. He had contracted ſo invincible an habit of walking on his hands, that it was neceſſary to faſten pieces of wood to him ſo as to keep him upright on his feet. It was the ſame with another child, found in 1694 in the foreſts of

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Lithuania, and trained up among bears. M. de Condillac ſays, he did not ſhew the leaſt ſign of reaſon, but walked on his hands and feet, and had no articulate ſpeech, but uttered ſome uncouth ſounds unlike the language of other men. The little ſavage, carried from Hanover to the court of England ſome years ago, was with great difficulty brought to walk upon his legs. In 1719 two other ſavages were found in the Pyrenean mountains, running up and down like quadrupeds. It is objected, indeed, that by walking upon our hands, we ſhould loſe the uſe of them in many other reſpects, wherein they are uſeful to us. But, not to inſiſt on the practice of monkeys, by which it is plain the hand may be employed both ways, this argument could only prove, that man may give to his members a more commodious diſtinction than that of nature, but not that nature deſtined man to walk otherwiſe than ſhe teaches him to walk.

But there appears to me much ſtronger reaſons, for affirming that man is naturally a biped. In the firſt place, if it could be ſhewn, that man might have originally been formed otherwiſe, and in time become what he now is; this would not be ſufficient to make us conclude that it did really ſo happen. For, though the poſſibility of ſuch a change were proved, it would be ſtill requiſite to ſhew ſome probability at leaſt of its having actually happened, before we admitted of its certainty. Beſides, admitting that the arms might, in caſe of neceſſity, ſerve for legs, it is the ſole argument in favour of the ſyſtem; whereas there are many others to contradict it. I ſhall mention the principal; in the

the first place, the manner in which the head of man is affixed to his body, instead of giving his eyes an horizontal direction, such as those of all other animals have, and as he has himself when walking erect, directs them downwards to the earth, a situation very unfavourable to the preservation of the individual. Secondly, the tail, which nature hath not bestowed on man, and which he hath no need of in walking, is so useful to quadrupeds that none of them are without it. Thirdly, the position of the breasts of the females is peculiarly adapted to bipeds, which hold their children in their arms, and would be so inconvenient to quadrupeds, that not one of them hath those parts in the same manner. Fourthly, the legs and thighs are so very long in proportion to the hands and arms, that we should be forced to crawl upon our knees, in walking on all-fours, and be very ill-proportioned animals and very unfit for walking. Fifthly, if such an animal should lay his foot, as well as his hand, flat on the earth, he would have in the hinder-leg a joint less than other animals, viz. that which joins the canon to the tibia. Besides, standing on the tip of the foot, as he must doubtless be forced to do, the tarsus, not to insist upon its being composed of so many bones, must have been too large to serve the purpose of the canon; and the articulations with the metatarsus and tibia too near each other to afford the leg, in that situation, the degree of flexibility observable in the legs of quadrupeds. The example of children, being taken from an age at which our natural forces are not as yet developed, nor our limbs arrived at their full strength,

proves nothing; and I might as well affirm that dogs are not originally formed to walk, becauſe that for ſome days after they are littered, they are able only to crawl. Particular facts are alſo of no great validity againſt the univerſal practice of mankind; even of nations which, having no commerce or communication with others, cannot be ſuſpected of having copied them. A child indeed, deſerted in a foreſt before he had ſtrength to walk, and ſuckled by ſome beaſt, would of courſe follow the example of its nurſe, and endeavour to walk like her. Hence habit might give him a facility of doing what was not intended for him by nature: even as a man who, having loſt his hands, may bring himſelf by dint of exerciſe to do thoſe things with his feet, which he hath been uſed to do with his hands; ſo might ſuch a deſerted child acquire at length a facility of employing his hands to the purpoſes deſtined by nature for its feet.

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(4.) If there ſhould be found among my readers any one of them ſo poor a naturaliſt, as to object to the ſuppoſition of this natural fertility of the earth, I ſhall anſwer him with the following quotation.

"As vegetables derive, for their ſupport, more ſubſtance from the air and water than from the earth, ſo, when they decay, they reſtore more to the earth than they received from it: beſides foreſts engroſs large quantities of rain water by ſtopping the vapours that would form it. Thus, in woods where the earth lies untouched for any conſiderable time, the ſtratum of earth containing the principles of vegetation

tation muſt have received a great quantity of them. But animals reſtoring to the earth leſs than they derive from it, and men conſuming vaſt quantities of vegetables for fuel and other purpoſes, it follows that, in populous countries, the ſtratum of vegetating earth is conſtantly on the decay, and muſt become at laſt like the ſurface of Arabia Petrea, and many other parts of the eaſt (the parts of the world which in fact were earlieſt inhabited) where nothing is at preſent to be found but ſalt and ſand, the fixed ſalt of plants and animals always ſtaying behind, while all the other parts of bodies become volatile and fly off." *Mr. de Buffon, Hiſt. Nat.*

To this may be added the teſtimony of matter of fact, in the vaſt quantity of trees and plants of every kind, with which the deſert iſlands, diſcovered in the latter centuries, were found covered; and in the immenſe woods which, we learn from hiſtory, have been cut down in all parts of the world, in proportion as they became more populous, and the people more civilized. On this I ſhall make the three following remarks. The firſt is, that, if there are any vegetables capable of replacing the vegetable matter conſumed by animals, according to Buffon, they muſt be ſuch trees as by their leaves and branches collect the greateſt quantity of water and vapour. The ſecond is, that the deſtruction of the ſoil, viz. the loſs of ſubſtance fit for vegetation, cannot fail to increaſe in proportion as the earth is cultivated, and as its inhabitants, grown more induſtrious, conſume its productions in greater quantities. The

third, and moſt important obſervation is, that the fruits of trees afford animals a more plentiful nutriment than they can expect from other vegetables. This I have myſelf experimented; having compared the produce of two pieces of land of equal area and quality, the one ſown with wheat, and the other planted with cheſnut trees.

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(5.) Among quadrupeds, the two moſt univerſal diſtinctions of the carnivorous tribes are deduced, one from the figure of the teeth, and the other from the conformation of the inteſtines. The animals, that ſubſiſt on vegetables, have all of them blunt teeth, as the horſe, the ox, the ſheep, the hare; but the teeth of carnivorous animals are ſharp, as thoſe of the cat, the dog, the wolf, and the fox. As to the inteſtines, the frugivorous have ſome, ſuch as the colon, which are not to be found in the carnivorous animals. It ſeems therefore that, the teeth and inteſtines of man being like thoſe of frugivorous animals, he ſhould naturally be ranged in this claſs. This queſtion alſo, is not only confirmed by anatomical obſervations, but is greatly favoured by the monuments of antiquity.

" Dicearchus, ſaith St. Jerom, relates in " his books of Grecian antiquities, that dur- " ing the reign of Saturn, when the Earth was " as yet fertile of itſelf, no man eat fleſh, but " all lived upon the fruits and pulſe which " were naturally produced." *(Lib. 2. Adv. Jovinian.)* It will be ſeen here, that I give up many

many advantages of which I might avail myſelf in this argument. For prey being almoſt the ſole object of quarrel among carnivorous animals, while the frugivorous live together in conſtant peace and harmony, it is evident that if men were of this laſt kind, they would find it much more eaſy to ſubſiſt in a ſtate of nature, and much leſs occaſion to leave it.

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(6.) All thoſe ſciences which require reflection, that are not to be attained without purſuing a chain of ideas, and that can only be brought to perfection ſucceſſively, ſeem to be entirely beyond the reach of ſavage man, for want of communication with his fellow ſavages; that is to ſay, for want of the inſtrument which ſhould ſerve to ſuch communication, and of thoſe wants which render it neceſſary. His knowledge and induſtry are confined to leaping, running, fighting, throwing ſtones and climbing trees. But if on the one hand, he can do nothing more, he is on the other hand, much more expert at theſe exerciſes than we. Yet as ſkill and expertneſs in ſuch exerciſes depends altogether on practice, and cannot be communicated or tranſmitted from one individual to another, the firſt man might poſſibly have been as dexterous at them as the lateſt of his poſterity.

The relations of voyagers are full of examples of the vigour and ſtrength of men in barbarous countries; they ſpeak little leſs alſo of their addreſs and agility; and as men ſtood in need only of their eyes to make ſuch obſervations, nothing prevents our giving credit to the

teſtimony of ocular witneſſes on theſe occaſions. I ſhall cite a few examples from the firſt books that come to hand.

"The Hottentots, ſays Kolben, are better fiſhermen than the Europeans who reſide at the Cape. They are equally dexterous at the uſe of the hook, the net, or the dart, in the creeks, on the ſea-ſhore, and in the rivers. They are no leſs expert alſo at catching fiſh with their hands; at ſwimming they are incomparable; having ſomething very peculiar and ſurprizing in their manner; which is to carry themſelves erect with their hands above water, ſo that they appear to walk upon the ground; and even upon the moſt mountainous ſea to dance, in a manner, on the backs of the waves, riſing and deſcending with them like pieces of cork."

We are told, by the ſame author in another place, that the Hottentots are amazingly dexterous at hunting; and that their ſwiftneſs of foot is altogether inconceivable. He wonders that they do not more frequently make a bad uſe of this agility; for that they do it ſometimes we may learn by the following example, which he relates of them.

"A Dutch ſea-man, coming aſhore at the cape, engaged an Hottentot to carry for him to the town, a roll of tobacco about twenty pounds weight; but when they had got to ſome little diſtance from the reſt of the company, the Hottentot aſked the ſailor if he could run. Run! anſwered the Dutchman, yes, very well. Come on then, let us ſee, replied the African; and, immediately taking to his heels, was out of ſight with the tobacco in an inſtant.

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The ſailor, aſtoniſhed at the ſwiftneſs of the ſavage, deſpaired of overtaking him, and never ſaw either his porter or his tobacco afterwards."

"Their ſight is ſo quick, and their hand ſo certain that the Europeans cannot come near them in theſe reſpects. They will, for inſtance, throw a ſtone at a mark no bigger than a halfpenny, and hit it at an hundred paces diſtance; and, what is ſtill more ſurprizing, inſtead of fixing their eyes on it, they run to and fro, and writhe their bodies ſo ſtrangely all the while, that one would be apt to think the ſtone was directed by an inviſible hand."

Father du Tertre tells nearly the ſame ſtory of the ſavages of the weſtern iſlands, as we read in Kolben of the Hottentots of the cape of Good Hope: but he extols chiefly their dexterity in ſhooting with arrows ſo as to hit the birds as they fly, and the fiſh as they ſwim; which they afterwards take by diving for them. The ſavages of North America are no leſs famous for their ſtrength and dexterity; nor are thoſe of South America behind them, if we may judge from the following example.

In the year 1746 an Indian of Buenos Ayres, having been condemned to the gallies at Cadiz, propoſed to the governor to purchaſe his liberty by hazarding his life at an enſuing publick feſtival; engaging to attack the moſt furious bull they ſhould bring, without any other weapon than a rope; to bring him to the ground and faſten his rope to any part of him he ſhould be ordered; to ſaddle him, bridle him; and then, mounting on his back, to fight two more of the moſt furious bulls they could turn out of the Torillo, and kill them both one after

another at the word of command; and all this alone and without any assistance whatever. The governor accepted the proposal, and the Indian was as good as his word; performing every thing he had promised. For a description of the manner he went about it, and the other particulars of this extraordinary engagement, I refer the reader to the first volume of *Mr. Gautier's Observations on natural history*, from which I have taken the above account.

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(7.) "The length of life in horses, Mr. de Buffon tells us, is proportionable to the length of time elapsed during their growth, as it is in every other species of animals. Man, who is fourteen years growing, may live six or seven times as long, that is ninety or an hundred years. The horse, whose growth is performed in four years, may in like manner live six or seven times as long, viz. twenty five or thirty years. The examples which may be cited in contradiction to this rule, are so few, that they ought not to be regarded as exceptions, from which any consequences may be drawn to invalidate the rule itself: but as large horses reach their full size in a much shorter time than those of a more slender and delicate make, so they are shorter lived, and even old at fifteen."

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(8.) I see another difference, methinks, between carnivorous and frugivorous animals, still more general than that laid down in note (5); as it extends even to the birds. This difference consists in the number of their young; which with

with thoſe animals that live upon vegetables never exceeds two at a litter, but is generally greater with thoſe of the carnivorous kind. It is eaſy to ſee the deſign of nature in this reſpect by the number of teats; which is never more than two in females of the firſt kind, as the mare, the cow, the goat, the doe, the ſheep, &c. and always ſix or eight in females of the other kind, as the bitch, the cat, the wolf, the tygreſs, &c.——As to birds, the hen, the gooſe, the duck, which are all carnivorous, as are alſo the eagle, the ſparrow-hawk and the owl, they all lay and hatch a great number of eggs; a circumſtance never known of the pigeon, the dove, or thoſe other birds which eat nothing but grain. Theſe rarely lay and hatch more than two eggs at a time. The reaſon for this difference may be, that thoſe animals, who ſubſiſt altogether on plants and herbs, being obliged to ſpend the greater part of the day in foraging, and thus requiring a great deal of time to feed themſelves, it would be impoſſible for them to give ſuck to many young ones; whereas carnivorous animals making their meal in a minute or two, may with greater eaſe and frequency, go and come between their young and their prey, repairing the waſte of ſo great a quantity of milk. Many other obſervations and reflections might be made with propriety on this head; but this is not the place for them: it is alſo ſufficient for my purpoſe that I have, in this part of my performance, pointed out the moſt general ſyſtem of nature, a ſyſtem which affords a new reaſon for removing man from the claſs of carnivorous to that of frugivorous animals.

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(9.) A celebrated author, in calculating the good and evil of human life, and comparing the ſums total of our pains and pleaſures, hath diſcovered that the firſt greatly exceeded the laſt; ſo that every thing conſidered, human life is no ſuch valuable gift. I am not ſurprized at theſe concluſions; as this writer drew his arguments from a view of man in his civilized ſtate. Had he taken a retroſpect to him in a ſtate of nature, it is plain the reſult of his inquiries would have been very different, and that man would have appeared to him ſubject to very few evils but thoſe of his own creating; to the exculpation of nature. It hath coſt us not a little to make ourſelves ſo miſerable as we are. When we conſider, on the one hand, the immenſe labours of mankind, the many ſciences brought to perfection, the arts invented, the powers employed, the deeps filled up, the mountains levelled, the rocks torn aſunder, the rivers made navigable, the tracts of land cleared, lakes emptied, marſhes drained, enormous ſtructures erected on land, and the floating caſtles that cover the ſea; and on the other hand, eſtimate with ever ſo little attention, the real advantages that have accrued from all theſe works to mankind, we cannot help ſtanding amazed at the vaſt diſproportion there is between theſe things, and deploring the infatuation of man, which, to gratify his ſilly pride and I know not what ſelf-admiration, induces him eagerly to purſue all the miſeries he is capable of feeling; and which beneficent nature had kindly placed at a diſtance from him.

Men

Men are actually wicked; deplorable and conſtant experience renders any argument to prove this unneceſſary: man, however, is naturally good: this I think I have demonſtrated. What can have depraved him then to ſuch a degree, except the changes that have happened in his conſtitution, his improvements and the knowledge he hath acquired? We may affect to admire the economy of ſociety as we pleaſe; it will not be the leſs true that it neceſſarily leads men to hate each other in proportion as their intereſts claſh; or that it induces men to do each other apparent ſervices, while they are really doing each other all imaginable miſchief. What can be thought of a commerce, in which the intereſt of every individual dictates maxims directly oppoſite to thoſe, which the publick good determines to be for the intereſt of the community in general; a commerce in which every man finds his account in the misfortunes of his neighbour? There is not perhaps any man in eaſy, or opulent, circumſtances, whoſe death his avaricious heirs, and perhaps his children, do not ſecretly wiſh for; not a ſhip at ſea, whoſe loſs would not be good news to ſome merchant or other; not a houſe, which ſome debtor would not be glad to ſee reduced to aſhes with all the papers it contains; not a nation which does not rejoice at the diſaſters that befall its neighbours. Thus it is that we find our advantage in the misfortunes of our fellow-creatures, and that the loſs of one man almoſt always conſtitutes the proſperity of another. But what is ſtill more pernicious, public calamities are ever the objects of the hopes and expectations of particular perſons.

Some wish for sickness, others for mortality, some for war, and some for famine. I have seen men wicked enough to weep for sorrow at the appearance of a plentiful season; and the great and fatal fire of London, which cost so many unhappy persons their lives or their fortunes, proved the making of the fortunes perhaps of above ten thousand other persons. I know that Montaigne censures Demades the Athenian, for having caused an artizan to be punished, who, selling his coffins very dear, was thereby a great gainer by the deaths of his fellow-citizens; but the reason alleged by Montaigne would argue for every man's being punished, and tends to confirm my argument. Let us penetrate, therefore, the superficial appearances of benevolence, and take a survey of what passes in the inmost recesses of the heart. Let us reflect on what must necessarily be the state of things, in which men are forced to cares and injure each other at the same time; and in which they are born enemies by duty, and knaves by interest. It will be objected perhaps, that society is so formed that every man is a gainer by serving the rest. It may be so, but does he not gain still more by injuring them? There is no lawful profit so great, but it may be greatly exceeded by what may be made unlawfully; for we always gain more by hurting our neighbours than by doing them good. Nothing more is required than for us to know how to act with impunity; and to this end the powerful employ all their force, and the weak all their cunning.

Savage man, when he has dined, is at peace with all nature, and the friend of all his fellow-creatures.

creatures. If a diſpute ſhould ever happen about a meal; he rarely comes to blows, without having firſt compared the difficulty of conquering his antagoniſts, with the trouble of finding ſubſiſtence elſewhere: and, as pride has no ſhare in the ſcuffle, it ends in a few blows; the victor eats, and the vanquiſhed ſeeks his proviſion in ſome other place, and all is quiet. The caſe is quite different with man in a ſtate of ſociety; for whom neceſſaries are firſt to be provided, then ſuperfluities; delicacies next follow, then wealth, then ſubjects, and then ſlaves. He enjoys not the leaſt relaxation; but, what is moſt extraordinary, the leſs natural and preſſing are his wants, the more headſtrong are his paſſions; and, what is ſtill worſe, the more he has it in his power to gratify them; ſo that after a long ſeries of proſperity, after having ſwallowed up treaſures and ruined multitudes, the hero cloſes the ſcene by cutting every throat till he finds himſelf, at laſt, ſole maſter of an empty world. Such is in miniature the moral picture, if not of human life, at leaſt of the ſecret pretenſions of civilized man.

Compare without partiality the ſtate of the citizen with that of the ſavage, and trace out, if you can, how many inlets the former hath opened to pain and death, beſides thoſe of his vices, his wants and his misfortunes. If you reflect on the mental afflictions that prey on us, the violent paſſions that waſte us, the exceſſive labour with which the poor are burthened, the ſtill more dangerous indolence in which the wealthy are immerſed, and which bring the one to the grave through want, and the other through exceſs:

reflect

reflect but a moment on the heterogeneous mixture, and pernicious manner of seasoning so many kinds, of food; the corrupt state in which they are frequently used; on the adulteration of medicines, the tricks of those who vend, and the mistakes of those who administer them, with the poisonous qualities of the vessels in which they are prepared; think but seriously on the epidemic diseases bred by foul air in consequence of great numbers of men being crowded together, or those occasioned by our delicate method of living, by our alternate transitions from the closest parts of our houses into the open air, by the putting on or throwing off our cloaths with too little precaution, and by all those conveniences which a boundless sensuality hath converted into necessary habits, and the neglect of which sometimes costs us our life or health: take note of the conflagrations and earthquakes, which, devouring or overwhelming whole cities, destroy the wretched inhabitants by thousands; sum up in fine, the dangers with which these causes are always attended; and you will then see how dearly nature makes us pay for the contempt with which we have treated her dictates.

I shall not here repeat, what I have elsewhere said of the calamities of war; but wish that those, who have sufficient knowledge for that purpose, were willing or bold enough to oblige us with a detail of the villainies committed in armies by the contractors for subsistence and hospitals: we should see plainly that their monstrous frauds, already too well known, are the occasion of greater destruction among the soldiers than is the sword of the enemy; and

that

that to such a degree as to make whole armies vanish, as it were instantaneously from the face of the earth.

The number of people who perish annually at sea, by famine, the scurvy, pirates and shipwrecks, affords matter for another shocking calculation. Besides, we are to place to the account of the establishment of property, and of consequence to the institution of society, the assassinations, poisonings, robberies on the highway, and even the punishments inflicted on the wretches guilty of these crimes; which, tho' expedient to prevent greater evils, yet by making the murder of one man prove the death of two, doubles the loss of the human species.

What shameful methods are sometimes practised to prevent the birth of men, and put a cheat on nature; either by such brutal and depraved appetites as debase her most beautiful work; appetites unknown to savages or to mere animals, and which can spring only from the corrupt imagination of mankind in civilized countries; or by secret abortions, the effects of debauchery and vitiated notions of honour; or by multitudes of infants falling victims to the poverty of their parents, or the cruel bashfulness of their mothers; or in fine, by the mutilation of unhappy wretches, part of whose being, with that of posterity, is given up for an idle song, or, what is still worse, the brutal jealousy of other men: a mutilation which, in the last case, becomes a double outrage against nature from the treatment of those who suffer it, and by the services to which they are destined. What if I should undertake to shew human-kind attacked in its very

ſource, and even its moſt ſacred ties; in forming which fortune is conſulted before nature; while the diſorder of ſociety confounding all virtue and vice, continence becomes a criminal precaution, and a refuſal to give life to a fellow-creature, an act of humanity? But, without drawing aſide the veil, which ſerves to hide ſuch numerous horrours, let us content ourſelves with having pointed out the evil, to which others ought to apply the remedy.

To all this let us add, the multiplicity of unhealthy trades, which ſerve to abridge human life, or deſtroy the conſtitution of the body: ſuch as working in the mines, and the preparing of metals and minerals, particularly lead, copper, mercury, cobalt, and arſenic: as alſo thoſe other pernicious occupations which are daily ſo fatal to tylers, carpenters, maſons and miners: let us unite, I ſay, all theſe objects, and then we may ſee, in the eſtabliſhment and perfection of ſocieties, the reaſons of that diminution of our ſpecies, which has been ſo frequently obſerved by the philoſophers.

Luxury, impoſſible to be prevented among men, tenacious of their own conveniences, and of the reſpect paid them by others, preſently compleats the evil which ſociety had begun; and under the pretence of giving bread to the poor, whom it ſhould never have made ſuch, impoveriſhes all the reſt, and ſooner or later depopulates the ſtate. Luxury is a remedy much worſe than the diſeaſe it pretends to cure; or rather it is in itſelf the greateſt of all evils, to every ſtate, whether great or ſmall: for, in order to maintain that number of ſervants and vagabonds it creates, it brings oppreſſion

preſſion and ruin on the citizen and labourer; juſt as thoſe ſcorching winds, which covering the trees and plants with devouring inſects, deprive uſeful animals of their ſubſiſtance; ſpreading famine and death wherever they blow.

From ſociety and the luxury it gives birth to, ariſe the liberal and mechanic arts, commerce, letters, and all thoſe ſuperfluities which make induſtry flouriſh, enrich and ruin nations. The reaſon of ſuch deſtruction is very plain. It is eaſy to ſee, from the very nature of agriculture, that it muſt be the leaſt lucrative of all the arts; becauſe its produce being moſt univerſally neceſſary, the price of it muſt be proportioned to the abilities of the very pooreſt of mankind.

From the ſame principle may be deduced this rule, that the arts in general are the more lucrative in proportion as they are leſs uſeful; and that, in the end, the moſt uſeful becomes the moſt neglected. From all which we may learn to form a judgment of the real advantages of induſtry and the actual effects of its progreſs.

Such are the palpable cauſes of all the miſeries, into which opulence at length plunges the moſt celebrated nations. In proportion as arts and induſtry flouriſh, the ſlighted huſbandman, burthened with the taxes neceſſary to the ſupport of luxury, and deſtined to paſs his days between labour and hunger, forſakes his native field, to ſeek that bread in town which he ought to carry thither. The more our capital cities ſtrike the vulgar eye with admiration, the greater reaſon is there to lament the ſight of large tracts of land that lie uncultivated, of the roads crowded with unfortunate citizens

citizens turned beggars or highwaymen, and doomed to end their wretched lives, either on a dunghill or at the gallows. It is thus the ſtate grows rich on the one hand, and grows feeble and is depopulated on the other; the mightieſt monarchies, after having taken immenſe pains to enrich and depopulate themſelves, falling at laſt a prey to ſome poor nation, which hath yielded to the fatal temptation of invading them, and then, growing opulent and weak in its turn, is itſelf invaded and ruined by ſome other.

Let any body condeſcend to inform us, what could produce thoſe ſwarms of Barbarians, which overran Europe, Aſia and Africa during ſo many ages. Was their prodigious encreaſe owing to the induſtry of their arts, the wiſdom of their laws, or the excellency of their police? Let the learned tell us why, inſtead of multiplying to ſo great a degree, theſe fierce and brutal men, without ſenſe or ſcience, without education, without reſtraint, did not deſtroy each other hourly in quarrelling for the ſpontaneous productions of their fields and woods. Let them tell us how theſe wretches could have the preſumption to oppoſe men, trained up to military diſcipline, and poſſeſſed of ſuch excellent legal inſtitutions: why, in fine, ſince ſociety hath been brought to perfection in the more northern climates, and ſo much pains have been taken to inſtruct their inhabitants in their ſocial duties, we ſee thoſe countries no longer produce ſuch numberleſs hoſts, which they formerly uſed to ſend forth to the plague and terrour of other nations. I am apprehenſive ſome body may at laſt anſwer me, by ſaying,

ing, that all these fine things, viz. arts, sciences and laws, were wisely invented by men, as a salutary plague, to prevent the too great multiplication of mankind, lest the world, which hath been given us for an habitation, should in time be found too little for its inhabitants.

What, then, is to be done? Must societies be totally abolished? Must *meum* and *tuum* be annihilated, and must we return again to the forests to live among bears? A consequence this, in the manner of my adversaries; which I had as lieve anticipate as let them have the scandal to draw. O ye, by whom the voice of heaven hath not been heard, who think man is destined only to live and die in peace; ye who may be able to resign in the midst of populous cities, your fatal acquisitions, your restless spirits, your corrupt hearts and endless desires; do you resume, since it depends entirely on yourselves, your ancient and primitive innocence: retire to the woods, there to lose the sight and remembrance of the crimes of your cotemporaries; nor be apprehensive of degrading your species, by renouncing its improvements in order to renounce its vices. With regard to men like me, whose passions have destroyed their original simplicity, who can no longer subsist on plants or acorns, or live without laws and magistrates; those who were honoured in their first parents with supernatural instructions; who discover, in the design of giving at first a morality to human actions which they must otherwise have been so long in acquiring, the reason of a precept in its self indifferent and inexplicable by every other system; those, in fine, who are persuaded that

that the divine being hath called all mankind to be partakers of the happineſs and perfection of celeſtial intelligences, all theſe will endeavour to merit the eternal prize they are to expect from the practice of thoſe virtues, to which they oblige themſelves in learning to diſtinguiſh them. They will reſpect the ſacred bonds of their reſpective communities; will love their fellow-citizens, and ſerve them with all their might: they will pay a religious obſervance to the laws, and all thoſe who make or adminiſter them; they will particularly do honour to thoſe wiſe and good princes, who diſcover means to prevent, cure or even palliate the crowd of evils and abuſes, with which we are conſtantly threatened; they will animate the zeal of their deſerving chiefs, by ſhewing them, without flattery or fear, the importance of their office and the ſeverity of their duty. But they will not therefore have leſs contempt for a conſtitution, which cannot ſupport itſelf without the aid of ſo many reſpectable characters, who are much oftener wiſhed for than obtained; and from which, notwithſtanding all their pains and ſolicitude, there always ariſe more real calamities than even apparent advantages.

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(10.) Among the different ſpecies of men we are acquainted with, either from the information of hiſtory, or the relations of travellers; ſome are black, others white, and others red; ſome wear long hair, others have on their heads only wool; ſome again are in a manner covered all over with hair, while others have not

not so much as a beard. There have been, and doubtless still are whole nations of people of a gigantic size; as to the story of the pigmies I shall not insist upon it, as it may be an exaggeration; but it is known of a certainty that the Laplanders, and especially the inhabitants of Greenland, are greatly below the middle stature: it is even pretended that there are nations with tails like quadrupeds; and, without pinning our faith on Herodotus and Ctesias, we may at least draw this probable conclusion from their relations, that if good observations could have been made in those early times, when the customs and manners of mankind differed more than they do at present, still greater diversities would have appeared in the figure and habit of their bodies. These facts, of which inconteſtible proof may be given, can only astonish those who never consider any objects but such as immediately surround them, and are strangers to the powerful influence of different modes of life, climate, air, food, and above all the surprizing effects of the same causes, when acting continually on a succession of generations.

In our day, when commerce, navigation and conquests have more generally united the different inhabitants of the earth, and their customs daily acquire a greater resemblance to each other, in consequence of a more frequent intercourse, there has been a great diminution of national differences. It is plain, for instance, that the modern French are very unlike those light-haired, fair-skinned bodies described by the Latin historians, though it might be imagined, that time, aided by the mixture of Franks and Normans equally fair, should have

have reſtored what the climate might have loſt, by the frequent viſitation of the Romans, of its influence over the natural conſtitution and complexion of the inhabitants. Theſe obſervations on the diverſities, which a multitude of cauſes may produce, and in effect have produced, in the human ſpecies, have led me to doubt whether ſeveral animals, which travellers for want of properly examining them have taken for beaſts, on account of ſome difference in their external form, or merely becauſe they wanted ſpeech, were not, after all, real men in a ſavage ſtate; whoſe race being early diſperſed in the woods, never had any developement of their faculties, but ſtill remained in their primitive ſtate of nature. To give an example of what I am ſaying. The tranſlator of the *Hiſtory of Voyages, &c.* tells us that there are found in the kingdom of Congo, a great number of thoſe large animals called, in the Eaſt Indies, Orang-Outang; forming a kind of middle order of beings between men and baboons. Battel relates, that in the foreſts of Mayomba in the kingdom of Loango, there are two ſorts of monſters, the biggeſt of which are called Pongos and the other Enjokos. The former, ſays he, are exactly like men, but much larger and taller. Their face is human, but hath very hollow eyes. Their hands, cheeks and ears are quite bare of hair to their eye-brows, which are very long. The other parts of their bodies are pretty hairy, and the hair is of a brown colour. In fine, the only thing, by which they can be diſtinguiſhed from the human ſpecies, is the form of their legs, which have no calves. They walk erect, holding the hair of

of their neck in their hands. They reſide in the woods, where they ſleep in the trees, making a kind of roof over them to ſkreen them from the rain. They never meddle with animal fleſh, but live on nuts and other wild fruits. The negroes, who, in travelling through foreſts, uſually light fires in the night time, remark that, as ſoon as they ſet off in the morning, the Pongos gather about the fire and ſtay there till it goes out; for, though theſe animals are very dexterous on ſome occaſions, they have not wit enough to keep the fire in, by ſupplying it with freſh fuel.

" They march ſometimes in companies, and kill the negroes who traverſe the foreſts. They even attack the elephants that come to feed near their haunts, and belabour them ſo heartily with fiſts and ſticks, that they make them roar and put them to flight. The Pongos when full grown are never taken alive; for they are then ſo robuſt, that ten ordinary men would not be able to manage one of them. The negroes, however, ſometimes take the young ones after killing their mother; to whoſe body they cling ſurprizingly faſt. When one of theſe animals dies, the others cover the body with an heap of leaves or branches of trees. Purchaſs adds, that in the converſation he had with Battel, he was told by him, that a Pongo carried off from him a little negroe, who ſtayed a whole month among theſe creatures: for it ſeems they do no harm to their captives, provided they do not look at them, as the little negroe obſerved. Battel has not deſcribed the ſecond kind of monſter.

" Dapper

" Dapper confirms that the kingdom of Congo is full of thoſe animals which in India are called Orang-Outang, or the inhabitants of the woods, and which the Africans call Quojas Morros. This creature, ſays he, bears ſo near a reſemblance to man, that ſome travellers have been fooliſh enough to think it might proceed from a woman and a monkey; a chimerical notion exploded even among the negroes. One of theſe animals was formerly brought over from Congo to Holland, and preſented to Frederick Henry, then Prince of Orange. It was about as tall as a child three years old, moderately corpulent, but ſquare-built and well-proportioned; very active and lively; its legs ſtrong and thick; the fore-part of the body without hair, and all the back-part covered with hair of a black colour. At firſt ſight, its face reſembled that of a man, but its noſe was flat and ſnubbed; its ears were like thoſe of the human ſpecies: its breaſts, for it was a female, were full, its navel indented, its ſhoulders well hung, its hands divided into fingers and thumbs; and the calves of its legs and its heels plump and fleſhy. She often walked erect, and could raiſe and carry burthens not over heavy. When ſhe drank, ſhe took hold of the lid of the veſſel with one hand, and of the bottom with the other; wiping her mouth after drinking very decently. She lay down, with her head on a cuſhion, to ſleep; covering herſelf up with ſo much dexterity, that one would think it was an human creature in bed. The negroes tell very ſtrange ſtories of this animal; aſſuring us that

that the male will not only raviſh women and girls, but that he hath the courage to attack even men though they are armed: in a word, there is a great appearance that this is the ſatyr of the ancients. Perhaps, Merolla ſpeaks of theſe very animals, when he ſays that the negroes ſometimes catch wild men and women, when they go hunting."

In the third volume of the ſame hiſtory of voyages, mention is made alſo of this ſpecies of anthropoform animals, under the name of Beggos and Mandrills. But to confine ourſelves to the foregoing relations; there is, in the deſcription of theſe pretended monſters, a ſtriking conformity in ſome particulars with the human ſpecies, and ſtill more minute differences than are ſometimes to be found between individuals among mankind. It does not appear from theſe paſſages, what reaſons the authors might have for refuſing the appellation of wild men to the animals in queſtion. But we may gueſs it was on account of their ſtupidity and want of ſpeech; weak arguments with thoſe who know that ſpeech itſelf is not natural to man whatever its organs may be, and who are aware that the capacity of improvement in the human ſpecies may have raiſed civilized man, infinitely above his original condition. The few words beſtowed on the above deſcriptions is ſufficient alſo to ſhew with what prejudice they have been obſerved, and how ſuperficially they have been examined. For inſtance, they are repreſented as monſters, and at the ſame time, it is admitted they propagate their ſpecies. Battel ſays, in one place, that "the Pongos kill the negroes they meet in the

woods." Purchaſs ſays, in another, that "they do them no harm provided the negroes do not look at them too intently." "The Pongos, ſays he, gather about the fires lighted by the negroes, when the latter leave it; and leave it themſelves in their turn when it goes out." This is the fact; obſerve the comment—"for, with all their dexterity, they have not wit enough to keep the fire in by ſupplying it with fuel." By what means did Battel, or his compiler Purchaſs, know that the Pongos retired rather out of ſtupidity than out of inclination? In ſuch a climate as that of Loango, animals can ſtand in little need of fire, and, if the negroes make fires, it is not ſo much with a view to warm themſelves, as to frighten and keep at a diſtance the wild beaſts with which the country abounds. It were but natural in the Pongos, therefore, after having amuſed themſelves for ſome time with the blaze, or warmed themſelves ſufficiently, to grow tired of ſtanding ſtill in the ſame place, and to return to their buſineſs of procuring ſuſtenance; which conſiſting of fruits would require a larger time, as before obſerved, than the fleſh of animals. It is beſides well known that moſt animals, and even man himſelf, are naturally indolent; and give themſelves no trouble about any thing they can make ſhift without. It ſeems, on the whole, very ſtrange that the Pongos, whoſe ſtrength and addreſs are ſo much boaſted, who know how to bury their dead, and to make themſelves awnings with leaves and branches, ſhould not know how to keep up a wood fire by puſhing the half-burnt ſticks into it. I myſelf remember to have ſeen a monkey

monkey do the ſame thing which Battel and Purchaſs will not admit that a Pongo has ſenſe enough to do. It is certain that, not having then a turn for ſuch kind of obſervation, I committed the very fault, for which I am now cenſuring the travellers: for I neglected to examine whether the monkey's deſign was to keep up the fire, or whether he acted only in mere imitation of thoſe he had ſeen do the ſame thing. Be this, however, as it may, it is plain the monkey does not belong to the human ſpecies; not only becauſe he wants the faculty of ſpeech; but principally becauſe his ſpecies is incapable of improvement, a capacity for which is the ſpecific characteriſtick of the human ſpecies. Now it does not appear that the ſame experiments have been made on the Pongos and the Orang-Outang, with care enough to furniſh the ſame concluſion. There is indeed a method, by which the moſt illiterate obſervers might come at the certain knowledge, whether the Orang-Outang or ſuch other animals are of the human ſpecies: but a ſingle generation would not be ſufficient for ſuch an experiment. It muſt be looked upon as impracticable alſo, becauſe it is requiſite that what is now only a ſuppoſition ſhould be proved a fact, before the experiment neceſſary to aſcertain the reality of it could be innocently made.

Haſty inferences, and ſuch as are not the effects of an enlightened underſtanding, are apt to be carried too far. Our modern travellers make beaſts, under the names of Pongos, Mandrils, and Orang-Outang, of the very beings which the ancients exalted into deities under the title of ſatyrs, fauns and ſylvans.

More exact inveſtigations will poſſibly ſhew them to have been men. It ſeems to me, in the mean time, to be full as reaſonable to confide in the account given us by Merolla, a learned eccleſiaſtick, an ocular witneſs, and who with great candour was alſo a man of genius, as in that of Battel a mere merchant, or thoſe of Dapper, Purchaſs and others who were mere compilers.

What would ſuch obſervers have ſaid of the child diſcovered in 1699, of which I have before ſpoken? he ſhewed not the leaſt marks of reaſon, walked upon his hands and feet, had no articulate ſpeech, but uttered ſounds totally unlike the human voice. He was for a conſiderable time (ſays the naturaliſt, from whom I take this account) incapable of ſpeaking any more than a very few words, and thoſe in a barbarous and imperfect manner. As ſoon as he could ſpeak intelligibly, he was aſked about his primitive ſituation; but of this he remembered no more than we do of what happened to us in the cradle. Had this child had the misfortune to have fallen into the hands of our travellers, they would have regarded only his ſilence and ſtupidity; and thence have either turned him looſe again into the woods, or have ſhut him up in ſome menagery; publiſhing a very learned account of him, as of a very curious beaſt not very much unlike a man.

The inhabitants of Europe have, for three or four centuries paſt, been employed in running over the other parts of the world, and are conſtantly publiſhing new collections of voyages; I am nevertheleſs of opinion that the people of Europe are the only men upon earth

we

we are as yet well acquainted with. Nay, to judge from the ridiculous prepoſſeſſions, which prevail to this day among men of letters, very few of them mean any thing more, by the pompous title of the ſtudy of mankind, than the ſtudy of their own countrymen. Particular perſons may go and come as they will, modern philoſophy appears to be no traveller, and thus that of one nation is very ſuitable to another. The cauſe of this is manifeſt at leaſt with regard to countries far diſtant. There are but four kinds of people who make long voyages; theſe are ſea-men, merchants, ſoldiers and miſſionaries. Now it is hardly to be expected that the three firſt ſhould be very good obſervers; and with reſpect to the laſt, even were they not, like the reſt, ſubject to the prejudices of their occupation, we may conceive they are too much taken up by the immediate duties of their ſublime vocation, to deſcend to engage in reſearches which may ſeem calculated merely to gratify curioſity; and which would interfere with the more important labours to which they are devoted. Beſides, in order to preach the goſpel with ſucceſs, zeal alone is ſufficient, the grace of God does all the reſt; but to ſtudy mankind with ſucceſs, talents are requiſite, which God hath not engaged to beſtow on any man, and which do not always fall to the ſhare even of the ſaints. We can hardly open a book of voyages without meeting with ſome deſcription of characters and manners; but it muſt ſeem ſurprizing that theſe travellers, who deſcribe ſuch a multiplicity of things, ſay hardly any thing that every reader is not previouſly acquainted with; and that they had not ſenſe

enough to obſerve more at the other end of the world than they might have done without going the length of a ſtreet; while the really diſtinguiſhing features of nations, which muſt ſtrike every judicious eye, have almoſt always eſcaped them. Hence comes that notable adage, ſo hackneyed by the philoſophers, that men of all countries are the ſame: and thus having every-where the ſame paſſions and the ſame vices, it is uſeleſs to endeavour to characterize different nations: a method of reaſoning this, little better than if we were to conclude, it is impoſſible to diſtinguiſh between Peter and James, becauſe they have each a mouth, a noſe, and a pair of eyes.

Will thoſe happy times never return, in which the populace did not preſume to philoſophize; but when a Plato, a Thales and a Pythagoras, excited by the deſire of knowledge, undertook the longeſt voyages merely for the ſake of information, and viſited the remoteſt parts of the earth, to throw off the yoke of national prejudice, to learn to diſtinguiſh men by the actual conformity and difference between them, and gain that general inſight into nature, which belongs not to any one age or country excluſive of others; but, being coexiſtent with every time and place, forms as it were the common ſcience of the wiſe.

We admire the magnificence of thoſe curious perſons, who have themſelves travelled at a great expence, or have ſent others to the eaſt, accompanied by men of letters and painters to take drawings of ruins, and to decypher or copy inſcriptions; but I can hardly conceive how it is, that in an age wherein uſeful and polite

polite literature are ſo much affected, there are not two men properly connected and rich, the one in money and the other in genius, both fond of glory and aſpiring after immortality; one of which ſhould be willing to ſacrifice twenty thouſand crowns of his fortune, and the other ten years of his life, to make a juſtly celebrated voyage round the world: not to confine their obſervations in ſuch voyage to plants and minerals, but for once to ſtudy men and manners, and, after ſo many ages ſpent in meaſuring and ſurveying the houſe, to make themſelves really acquainted with thoſe who live in it.

The academicians who viſited the northern parts of Europe and the ſouthern parts of America, had more in their view to do it as geometricians than as philoſophers. As they were both one and the other, however, we cannot look upon thoſe countries, which have been ſeen and deſcribed by a Condamine and a Maupertuis, as altogether unknown. Chardin, who travelled like Plato, has left nothing to be ſaid on the ſubject of Perſia; China ſeems to have been well obſerved by the Jeſuits. Kempfer gives a tolerable account of the little he ſaw in Japan. But except what we learn from theſe relations, we know nothing of the inhabitants of the Eaſt Indies: for tho' theſe countries are frequently viſited, it is by people much more intent on filling their pockets with money than their heads with uſeful knowledge. The whole continent of Africa and its numerous inhabitants, equally ſingular with regard both to character and colour, ſtill remain un-

explored; the earth is indeed covered with nations of which we know nothing but the names; and yet we ſet up truly for judges of humankind.

Let us ſuppoſe that a Monteſquieu, a Buffon, a Diderot, a Duclos, a D'Alembert, a Condillac, or men of the like ſtamp, engaged in a voyage for the information of their countrymen, obſerving and deſcribing in the manner they are capable of doing, the ſeveral countries of Turky, Egypt, Barbary, the empire of Morocco, Guinea, Caffraria, the inner parts and eaſtern ſhores of Africa, Malabar, the Mogul's country, the banks of the Ganges, the kingdoms of Siam, Pegu and Iva, China, Tartary, and above all Japan; then in the other hemiſphere Mexico, Peru, Chili, Terra Magellanica, not omitting the real or imaginary Patagonians, Turcumania, and if poſſible Paraguay, Brazil, the Caribbee Iſlands, Florida, and all the ſavage countries; the moſt important and difficult part of the whole voyage: let us ſuppoſe then that theſe new Hercules ſhould ſit down, at their return from theſe famous expeditions, to compoſe at leiſure, a phyſical, moral and political hiſtory of all they had ſeen. A new world would undoubtedly ri e up before our eyes, and we might thence learn to form ſome tolerable judgment of our own. I ſay that when ſuch obſervers ſhould affirm of one animal that it was a man, and of another that it was a brute, we ought to believe them; but it would be the higheſt inſtance of ſimplicity, to put the ſame confidence, with regard to theſe matters, in ſuch illiterate travellers,

vellers, as would ſometimes ſuggeſt to us the very ſame doubt of themſelves, as they take upon them to determine about other animals.

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(11.) This ſeems to be very evident, and I cannot conceive whence our philoſophers deduce all the paſſions they attribute to natural man. If we except the mere phyſical neceſſaries, which nature immediately requires, all our wants are the effects of habit, which till we acquired we had no wants; or of our deſires; but we never deſire any thing we are not in circumſtances to know. It follows hence that, as ſavage man deſires nothing but what he knows, and knows nothing but what he poſſeſſes or can readily acquire, nothing can be more calm and diſpaſſionate than his ſoul, nor ſo limited as his underſtanding.

(12.) In Mr. Locke's treatiſe on Civil Government, I find one objection that appears too ſpecious to be here paſſed over. It is as follows: "§. 79. For the end of *conjunction, between male and female*, being not barely procreation, but the continuation of the ſpecies; this conjunction betwixt male and female ought to laſt, even after procreation, ſo long as is neceſſary to the nouriſhment and ſupport of the young ones, who are to be ſuſtained by thoſe that got them, till they are able to ſhift and provide for themſelves. This rule, which the infinite wiſe Maker hath ſet to the works of his hands, we find the inferior creatures ſteadily obey. In thoſe viviparous animals which feed on graſs, the *conjunction between male and female* laſts no longer than the very act.

of copulation; becauſe the teat of the dam being ſufficient to nouriſh the young, till it be able to feed on graſs, the male only begets, but concerns not himſelf for the female or young, to whoſe ſuſtenance he can contribute nothing. But in beaſts of prey the *conjunction* laſts longer: becauſe the dam not being able well to ſubſiſt herſelf, and nouriſh her numerous off-ſpring by her own prey alone, a more laborious, as well as more dangerous way of living, than by feeding on graſs, the aſſiſtance of the male is neceſſary to the maintenance of their common family, which cannot ſubſiſt till they are able to prey for themſelves, but by the joint care of male and female. The ſame is to be obſerved in all birds, (except ſome domeſtic ones, where plenty of food excuſes the cock from feeding, and taking care of the young brood) whoſe young needing food in the neſt, the cock and hen continue mates, till the young are able to uſe their wing, and provide for themſelves.

" §. 80. And herein I think lies the chief, if not the only reaſon, *why the male and female in mankind are tied to a longer conjunction* than other creatures, *viz.* becauſe the female is capable of conceiving, and *de facto* is commonly with child again, and brings forth too a new birth, long before the former is out of a dependency for ſupport on his parents help, and able to ſhift for himſelf, and has all the aſſiſtance is due to him from his parents: whereby the father, who is bound to take care for thoſe he hath begot, is under an obligation to continue in conjugal ſociety with the ſame woman longer than other creatures, whoſe young being able to ſubſiſt of themſelves, before the time of procreation

creation returns again, the conjugal bond diſſolves of itſelf, and they are at liberty, till *Hymen* at his uſual anniverſary ſeaſon ſummons them again to chuſe new mates. Wherein one cannot but admire the wiſdom of the great Creator, who having given to man foreſight, and an ability to lay up for the future, as well as to ſupply the preſent neceſſity, hath made it neceſſary, that *ſociety of man and wife ſhould be more laſting*, than of male and female amongſt other creatures; that ſo their induſtry might be encouraged, and their intereſt better united, to make proviſion and lay up goods for their common iſſue, which uncertain mixture, or eaſy and frequent ſolutions of conjugal ſociety would mightily diſturb."

The ſame love of truth, which induced me faithfully to exhibit this objection, leads me alſo to accompany it with a few remarks, if not to refute, at leaſt to contribute ſomething to its illuſtration.

1. I ſhall obſerve, in the firſt place, that moral arguments are of no great validity in phyſical diſputes, and that they ſerve rather to account for facts which exiſt than to aſcertain the real exiſtence of facts themſelves. Now ſuch is the ſpecies of argument made uſe of by Mr. Locke in the paſſage above-quoted; for tho' it may be to the intereſt of mankind that the union between the male and female ſhould be permanent, it does by no means follow that ſuch an union was eſtabliſhed by nature; for otherwiſe it muſt be admitted that nature inſtituted civil ſociety, arts, commerce, and every thing elſe pretended to be uſeful to mankind.

2. I know not where Mr. Locke discovered that among animals of prey, the connection between the male and female lasts longer than among those who subsist on grass, and that the male assists the female in nursing their young: we don't perceive that the dog, the cat, the bear, or the wolf shew more regard to their females than the horse, the ram, the bull, the stag, or any other quadrupeds shew to theirs. It appears, on the contrary, that, if the assistance of the male were necessary to the female for the preservation of their young, it would be particularly so among such animals as subsist altogether on grass; because the female takes up more time to feed in this way, and is obliged all the while to neglect her young; whereas a she-bear or wolf devours her prey in a very short time, and has therefore more to bestow on the care of her litter, without suffering any thing from hunger. This remark is confirmed by the relative number of teats and of young ones, that distinguishes the carnivorous from the frugivorous kinds, as hath been already observed in a preceding note. If this observation also be just and general, a woman's having but two breasts, and seldom bearing more than one child at a time, affords another, and a very strong reason, for doubting the human species to be naturally carnivorous: so that, in order to draw Mr. Locke's conclusion, the terms of his argument should be inverted. There seems to be as little validity in the same distinction when applied to birds: for who can conceive the connection between male and female is more lasting among vultures and ravens than among doves?

There

There are two kinds of domeſtic birds, viz. the duck and the pigeon, which afford us examples directly oppoſite to this writer's ſyſtem. The pigeon, who lives entirely upon corn, is ever conſtant to his female, and both feed their young ones in common. The drake, on the other hand, whoſe voraciouſneſs is notorious, takes no care either of the young or their mother-duck. Among cocks and hens, who are not much leſs ravenous, the former are never known to trouble themſelves about eggs or chickens: and, if among ſome other ſpecies the male ſhares in the care of feeding the young, it is becauſe ſuch birds being unable to fly as ſoon as hatched, cannot ſubſiſt ſo well without the aſſiſtance of the male, as quadrupeds, who, for ſome time at leaſt, are ſuckled by the female, and require nothing more.

3*dly*. There is much uncertainty in the principal fact, which ſerves as the baſis of Mr. Locke's argument: for, in order to know whether, as he pretends, woman in a ſtate of nature generally becomes pregnant, and brings forth a new child, long before the former is capable of providing for itſelf, ſome experiments are neceſſary to be made, which Mr. Locke certainly had not made, and which nobody indeed is in a ſituation to make. The conſtant cohabitation of huſband and wife in a ſtate of ſociety, affords ſuch an occaſion for the latter to expoſe herſelf to a new pregnancy, that it is hardly likely accidental encounters or ſudden guſts of paſſion ſhould produce ſuch effects ſo frequently in a ſtate of nature, as in that of conjugal ſociety. This delay, however, would very probably contribute to render the children

children more robuſt; and would be at the ſame time compenſated for, by extending the ability of conception in women to a more advanced age, as they would the leſs abuſe it in their youth. As to children, there are many reaſons for concluding that their organs and abilities unfold themſelves later among us than they did in the primitive ſtate of man. The original imbecility, which they derive from the weak conſtitution of their parents, the care taken to bind up, ſtrain and cramp all their limbs, the tenderneſs with which they are treated, and perhaps their uſe of the milk of a woman that is not their mother; every thing in ſhort ſerves with us to oppoſe and check the firſt operations of nature. The application they are obliged to beſtow on various objects, to which we conſtantly direct their attention, while their corporeal faculties remain unexerciſed, may contribute alſo much to retard their growth. So that if, inſtead of overcharging and perplexing their minds, we ſhould permit them to exerciſe their bodies in that continual motion, which nature ſeems to require, it is probable they would be much ſooner capable of walking about and providing for themſelves.

4thly. In fine, the moſt that Mr. Locke proves, is, that ſavage man might have a motive to live with a woman, when ſhe had brought him a child; but he by no means proves that he had any inducement to live with her, before her delivery, during her nine months pregnancy: and if the pregnant woman ſhould come to be indifferent to the man by whom ſhe is pregnant during thoſe nine months, if ſhe ſhould even be entirely forgot by him, as is not

improbable

improbable to ſuppoſe, why ſhould he aſſiſt her after her delivery? Why ſhould he aid her to rear a child, which he does not know to be his, and whoſe birth he neither foreſaw nor intended? It is plain that Mr. Locke has ſuppoſed the thing itſelf that was in queſtion; for we do not enquire why a man ſhould continue to live with a woman after her delivery, but why he ſhould continue attached to her after conception. When the appetite is once ſatisfied, the man ſtands no longer in need of any particular woman, nor the woman of any particular man. The latter troubles himſelf no more about what has happened, and perhaps hath not the leaſt notion of what muſt enſue. One of them goes one way, and the other another, in ſo much that there is little room to think they ſhould remember, at the end of nine months, that they had ever ſeen each other before. For this kind of memory, by means of which one individual gives to another the preference for the act of generation, requires, as I have proved in the text, a greater degree of improvement or corruption of the human underſtanding, than man can be ſuppoſed to have attained in the ſtate of animality now in queſtion. Any other woman, therefore, may ſerve to gratify the new deſires of the man, as well as ſhe whom he hath before known; and in like manner, any other man may gratify thoſe of the woman, ſuppoſing her to be ſubject during her pregnancy to the ſame appetite; a circumſtance however that may be reaſonably queſtioned. And if the woman in a ſtate of nature, does not feel the paſſion of love after conception, there is ſtill a greater obſtacle to her

her associating with man, as she has no longer any occasion for the man by whom she became pregnant, or indeed any other. There is therefore no motive on the side of the man, for his coveting the same woman, nor on the woman's for coveting the same man. Mr. Locke's argument therefore is defective, nor hath the logick of this philosopher secured him from the mistakes which Hobbes and others have committed.

Their business was to explain a fact in the state of nature; that is in a state in which every man lived by himself without any connection with other men; a state in which no one had any inducement to associate with another, nor, what is worse, mankind in general any inclination to herd together. It never suggested to them that they should take a retrospect beyond the commencement of society; since which individuals had always a motive for associating with this or that particular man or woman.

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(13.) I shall beware of launching forth into those philosophical reflections, which may be made on the advantages and disadvantages of the institution of languages. It is not for such men as me, to think of being suffered to attack vulgar errours, the herd of men of letters are too fond of their prejudices to bear my pretended paradoxes with any kind of patience. I shall let those speak, therefore, in whom it hath not been deemed criminal to dare sometimes to take part with common sense against the opinion of the multitude. "Nec quidquam felicitati humani generis decederet, si, pulsâ

pulsâ tot linguarum peste et confusione, unam artem callerent mortales, et signis, motibus, gestibusque licitum foret quidvis explicare. Nunc vero ita comparatum est, ut animalium quæ vulgò bruta creduntur, melior longè quàm nostra hac in parte videatur conditio, ut pote quæ promptius et forsan felicius, sensus et cogitationes suas sine interprete significent, quam ulli queant mortales, præsertim si peregrine utantur sermone." *Is. Vossius* de poemat. Cant. et Viribus Rythmi. p. 66.

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(14.) Plato, in shewing how far the ideas of discrete quantity and its relations are requisite in the most insignificant arts, ridicules those authors of his age, and with great reason, who pretended that Palamedes invented numbers at the siege of Troy; as if it were possible, says he, that Agamemnon should not know till then how many fingers or toes he had. In effect, every one must see how impossible it was that society and the arts should have attained that degree of perfection at which they certainly were arrived, at the time of that celebrated siege, unless mankind had been acquainted with the use of numbers and calculation. But the necessity of understanding numbers, previous to the acquisition of other sciences, does not assist us to account for the invention of them. When the names of numbers are once known, it is easy to explain the meaning of them, and to excite the ideas their names present; but in order to invent them, it was necessary previous to the conception of these ideas, that the mind of man should have been

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in a manner familiarized with philoſophical ſpeculations, and ſhould have exerciſed itſelf in conſidering beings purely according to their eſſence, and independently of its perceptions: an abſtract mode of thinking very difficult and metaphyſical, not to ſay in ſome meaſure unnatural; without which notwithſtanding, theſe ideas could never have been communicated from one mind to another, nor numbers ever have become univerſal.

A ſavage might ſeparately conſider his right leg and his left leg, or look upon them together under the indiviſible idea of a pair, without ever thinking he had two; for the repreſentative idea which deſcribes an object to us is one thing, and the numerical idea which determines it another. He would be ſtill leſs able to count as far as five; and tho', on the application of his hands to each other, he might remark that the fingers exactly anſwered, yet he might be very far from thinking on their numerical quality. He knew as little about the number of his fingers as of his hairs; and if, after giving him to underſtand what numbers are, any one had told him that he had no more fingers than toes, he would in all probability have been greatly ſurprized to find on comparing them, that they were exactly equal in number.

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(15.) We ſhould not confound ſelfiſhneſs with ſelf-love; as they are two very diſtinct paſſions both in their nature and effects. Self-love is a natural ſentiment, which inclines every animal to regard its own preſervation; and which,

which, when directed by reaſon and qualified by compaſſion, is productive of humanity and virtue. Selfiſhneſs is a relative and factitious ſentiment, formed in the midſt of ſociety, and inclining individuals to ſet a greater value on themſelves than upon other men; a ſentiment which excites men to all the miſchief they do to each other, and is the true ſource of modern honour.

This being well underſtood, I proceed to affirm that ſelfiſhneſs does not exiſt in a primitive ſtate of nature; for every man in particular conſidering himſelf as the only perſon by whom he is obſerved, as the only being in the univerſe intereſted in him, as the only judge of his own merit, it is not poſſible that he ſhould entertain a ſentiment, ariſing from compariſons he has it not in his power to make. A man of this kind muſt, for the ſame reaſon, be a ſtranger to malice and hatred, paſſions, which the notion of our having ſuffered ſome inſult, can only excite. As it is contempt alſo, or an intent to injure, and not the injury itſelf, that conſtitutes an affront, thoſe men, who know not how to ſet a value on themſelves, or enter into a compariſon with each other, may do one another a great deal of miſchief, as often as they can hope any advantage from it, without ever affronting each other. In a word, every man in a ſtate of nature, ſeldom looking upon his fellows in any other light than he would animals of a different ſpecies, may rob and plunder another man if weaker than himſelf, or be plundered in his turn by another that is ſtronger, without conſidering ſuch acts of violence in any other light than as natural events, without the leaſt ſenſe of reſentment

or

or malice, and without any other paſſion than grief or joy at his good or ill ſucceſs.

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(16.) It is a thing very remarkable, that, altho' the Europeans have been endeavouring, for ſo many years paſt, to bring over the ſavages of different parts of the world to our manner of living, we have not been able as yet to prevail on one of them; not even with the aſſiſtance of the motives of chriſtianity, for it is certain that though our miſſionaries have converted ſavages into Chriſtians, they never have been able to civilize them. There is no poſſibility of ſurmounting their invincible reluctance to our cuſtoms and manners. But if theſe poor people are really ſo unhappy as ſome repreſent them, by what unaccountable depravity is it that they ſo obſtinately refuſe to ſubmit to our government, or to live happy among us? Whereas we read frequently of Frenchmen and other Europeans, who have voluntarily taken refuge and ſpent the remainder of their lives among ſavages, without being able to quit them. Nay, we have inſtances of very ſenſible miſſionaries, that have with tears regretted the calm and innocent days they had ſpent among the ſimple mortals we ſo much deſpiſe. If it be objected that they have not underſtanding enough to judge properly of the difference of conditions, I reply that happineſs is not ſo properly eſtimated by the underſtanding as by the heart. Beſides, this objection may be retorted with greater force on ourſelves; for our notions are far more remote from the diſpoſition of mind neceſſary for us to taſte

taſte the reliſh, which the ſavages find in their way of life, than their notions are from thoſe by which they may enter into the reliſh we find in ours. In fact, it is eaſy for them to ſee, after a very few obſervations, that all our endeavours are employed on two objects, viz. on the conveniences of life, and the reſpect paid us by others. But, how ſhall we be able to conceive that kind of pleaſure, which a ſavage finds in ſpending his time in ſolitude, in the woods, in fiſhing, or in blowing into a wretched flute, without being able to make it ſound a note, or taking any trouble to learn better?

There have been ſavages frequently brought to Paris, London, and other places; and no pains ſpared to inſtill into them ſublime ideas of our luxury, our wealth, and uſeful and curious arts; they were never ſeen, however, to expreſs any thing more than a ſtupid admiration of thoſe things without the leaſt appearance of coveting them. I remember, among other circumſtances, related of the chief of ſome American Indians who was about thirty years ago in London, a number of things were ſhewn him, in order to ſee what preſent might be acceptable to him, but without fixing upon any thing he happened to like. Our arms ſeemed clumſy and inconvenient; our ſhoes hurt his feet; our cloaths incumbered his limbs; he would in ſhort accept of nothing; at length, however, he was obſerved to fix his eye on a blanket, which he wrapped with a ſeeming pleaſure over his ſhoulders. On this, the people about him remarked that he muſt allow this to be an uſeful piece of furniture.

Yes,

Yes, replied the Indian, it ſeems to me almoſt as good as the ſkin of a beaſt. Not that he would have allowed even this, had he compared the different wear of both in a ſhower of rain. It may perhaps be ſaid it is from habit that different people liking their own way of life beſt, the ſavages are hindered from perceiving the pleaſures of ours. Upon this footing, however, it muſt appear at leaſt very extraordinary, that habit ſhould have more influence to preſerve in ſavages a reliſh for their miſery, than in the Europeans a taſte for the enjoyment of their felicity. But to make an unanſwerable reply to this objection; and that without taking notice of the many young ſavages, whom no endeavours have been able to civilize; or the natives of Greenland and Iceland, whom it has been ſeveral times attempted to educate in Denmark, and who have either pined away with grief aſhore, or periſhed at ſea in attempting to ſwim back to their own country; I ſhall content myſelf with the citation of one well atteſted example, and leave it to the determination of thoſe who ſo greatly admire the police of European ſtates.

"The Dutch miſſionaries have not been able, with all their endeavours, to convert a ſingle Hottentot. Vander Stel their governor at the Cape, having procured an Hottentot child, had him educated in the principles of the Chriſtian religion, and the manners and cuſtoms of Europe. He had him richly cloathed, and inſtructed in various languages; while the boy's improvement was equal to the pains beſtowed on him. The governor, full of expectations

pectations from his pupil's capacity, ſent him to the Indies with a commiſſary general, who employed him in tranſacting the company's buſineſs. On his return, however, to the Cape, after the death of the commiſſary, he made a viſit to his Hottentot relations; in which he took a reſolution to throw off all his European finery, and to cloathe himſelf again in a ſheep's-ſkin. Thus equipped, he returned to the fort, bringing with him his other clothes in a bundle, and preſenting them to the governor, addreſſed him in the following words. "Be ſo good, Sir, as to take notice that I renounce for ever this dreſs. I renounce, likewiſe, for ever the Chriſtian religion; my reſolution being to live and die in the religion, the manners and cuſtoms of my anceſtors. The only favour I aſk of you, is to permit me to wear this collar and hanger. I will keep them for your ſake." Having ſaid this, without waiting for an anſwer from the governor, he diſappeared in an inſtant, and was never after ſeen at the Cape." *Hiſtoire des Voyages, Tom.* 5. *p.* 175.

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(17.) It might be objected here, that in ſuch a ſtate of turbulence and diſorder, mankind would have diſperſed, inſtead of obſtinately cutting each others throats, had their diſperſion been limited. But, in the firſt place, their limits would only have been thoſe of the whole earth; and if we reflect on the great population reſulting from a ſtate of nature, we ſhall find that in ſuch a ſtate the earth would have been covered, in a very ſhort time, with men, thus forced

forced to keep close together. Besides, had the progress of the evil been rapid, they would have dispersed, or had it been a change suddenly effected. But they brought their fetters with them into the world; they were even in their infancy too much inured by custom to the weight of them, to feel them troublesome ever after. In fine, they were accustomed to a variety of conveniences, which obliged them to herd together: it was not so easy for them to disperse now as in those early times, when no man standing in need of any other, every one did what he liked best, without waiting for any other's consent.

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(18.) Marshal de V— used to relate that the frauds of one of the contractors for the army, in one of his campaigns, having occasioned a very general complaint among the troops, he sent for the offender, and, after rating him pretty handsomely, threatened him with the gallows. To all which the hardened rascal calmly replied, that such threats did not at all affect him, but that he was glad of an occasion of telling the Marshal, that a man is not so readily hanged who has an hundred thousand crowns at his dispoſal. And I know not how it happened, added the Marshal ingenuously, but so it was, the scoundrel escaped hanging, notwithstanding he had deserved it an hundred times.

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(19.) Distributive justice, indeed, would oppose this rigorous equality of a state of nature, even

even were it practicable in civil ſociety; and as all the members of the ſtate owe it their ſervices in proportion to their talents and abilities, ſo they ought, on their part, to be diſtinguiſhed and favoured in the ſame proportion to the ſervices they have actually rendered it. It is in this ſenſe we muſt underſtand that paſſage of Iſocrates, in which he extols the primitive Athenians, for having determined which of the two kinds of equality was the moſt uſeful, viz. that which conſiſts in dividing the ſame advantages indiſcriminately among all the citizens in common, or that which conſiſts in diſtributing them to each according to his merit. Theſe able politicians, adds the orator, baniſhing that unjuſt inequality which makes no diſtinction between bad men and men of probity, adhered inviolably to that which rewards and puniſhes every man according to his deſert.

But in the firſt place, there never exiſted a ſociety, to whatever degree of corruption ſome have arrived, wherein no difference was made between the good and bad: and with regard to manners wherein no meaſures can be preſcribed by law exact enough to ſerve as a practical rule to magiſtrates, it is with great prudence that, in order not to leave the fortune or quality of the citizens to their diſcretion, ſhe prohibits their paſſing judgment on perſons and confines it to actions. There are no manners, unleſs ſuch as are pure as were thoſe of the ancient Romans, that can bear with the office of cenſors, ſuch a tribunal among us would throw every thing into confuſion. The difference between good and bad men is determined by publick eſteem; the magiſtrate being only a

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